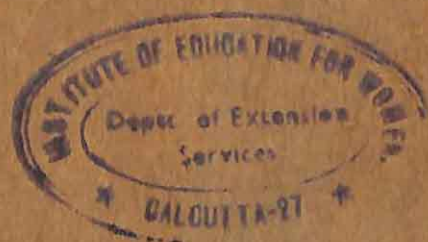


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# The Counseling Interview



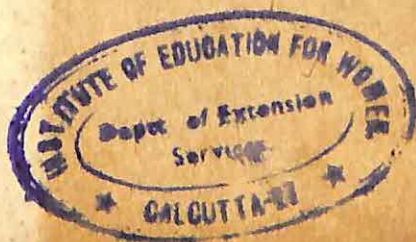


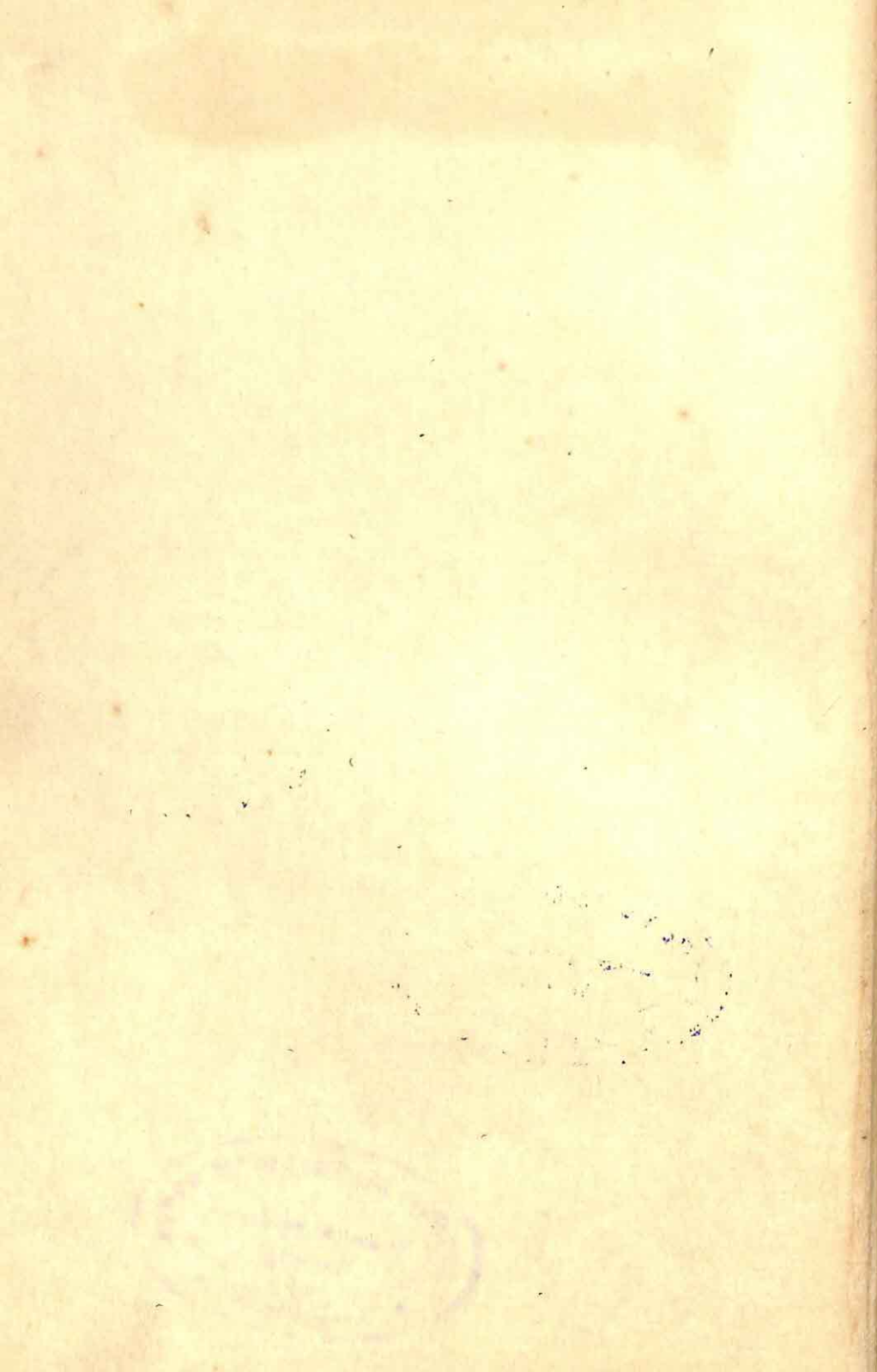
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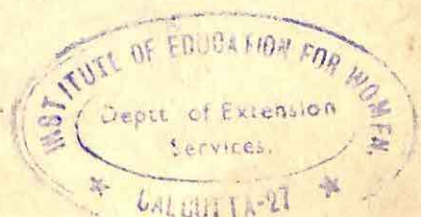
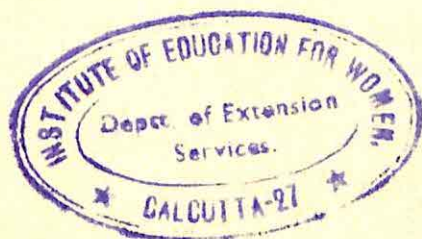
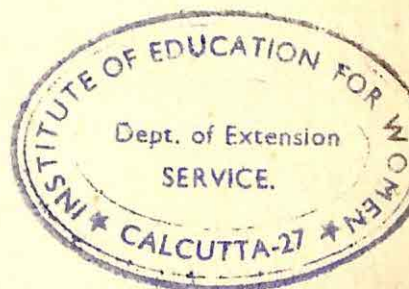
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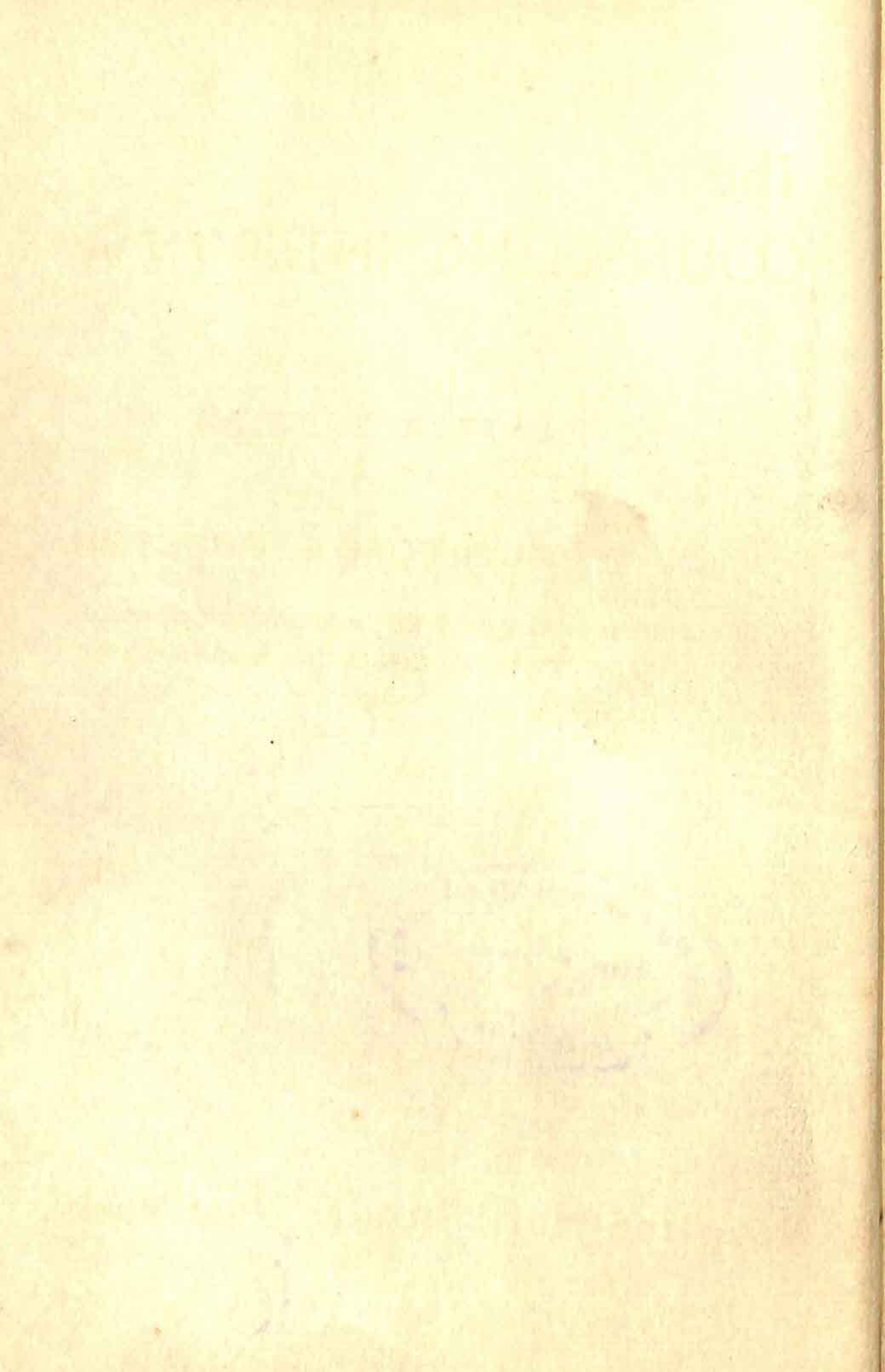






## The COUNSELING INTERVIEW





# The COUNSELING INTERVIEW

CLIFFORD E. ERICKSON

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Prentice-Hall, Inc.

New York

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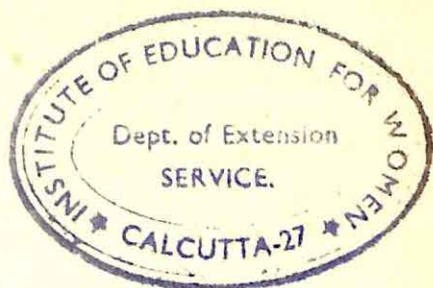
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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THIRD PRINTING . . . APRIL, 1955





## Preface

COUNSELING services are rapidly developing in all parts of the country. The number of people engaged in counseling in the public schools, in particular, is expanding with great rapidity. Counseling services are also expanding in business, governmental, social-service, and industrial situations. It now appears that this growth will accelerate for a long time. As yet, business and industrial organizations have barely started the important task of improving production by promoting better human adjustments.

Every counselor uses the interview as a basic and central technique. Teachers interview with great frequency. Almost all guidance services are established so that the counselor can do a better job, through the interview, of helping pupils with their problems and their plans. Teachers, foremen, administrators, supervisors, and many other workers rely on interviewing as one of their most important skills.

This book attempts to select from all the discussion and controversy on the subject some of those practical suggestions that every interviewer can use. The materials have been vigorously tested through several years of actual practice and experimentation. It is hoped that all interviewers will find some help and direction in the following pages.

The author wishes to express his appreciation for the many people who have contributed suggestions. Graduate

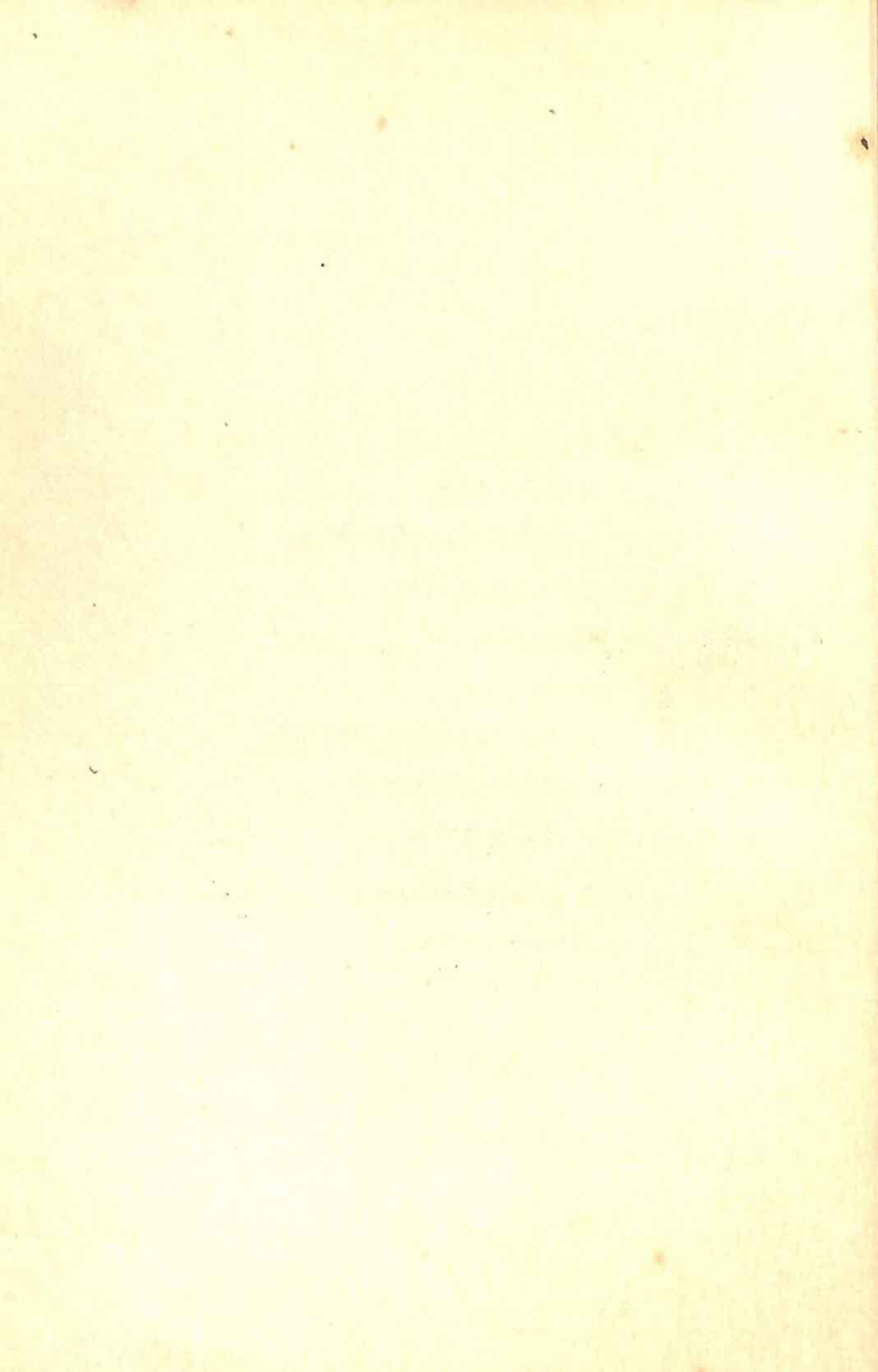
## PREFACE

students at Michigan State, Harvard University, Denver University, the University of Southern California, and Northwestern University have made significant contributions. The following co-workers have been of immeasurable assistance: E. L. Harden, R. N. Hatch, W. F. Johnson, K. G. Nelson, and H. B. Pepinsky. To all of them, a sincere acknowledgment of their many contributions.

C. E. ERICKSON

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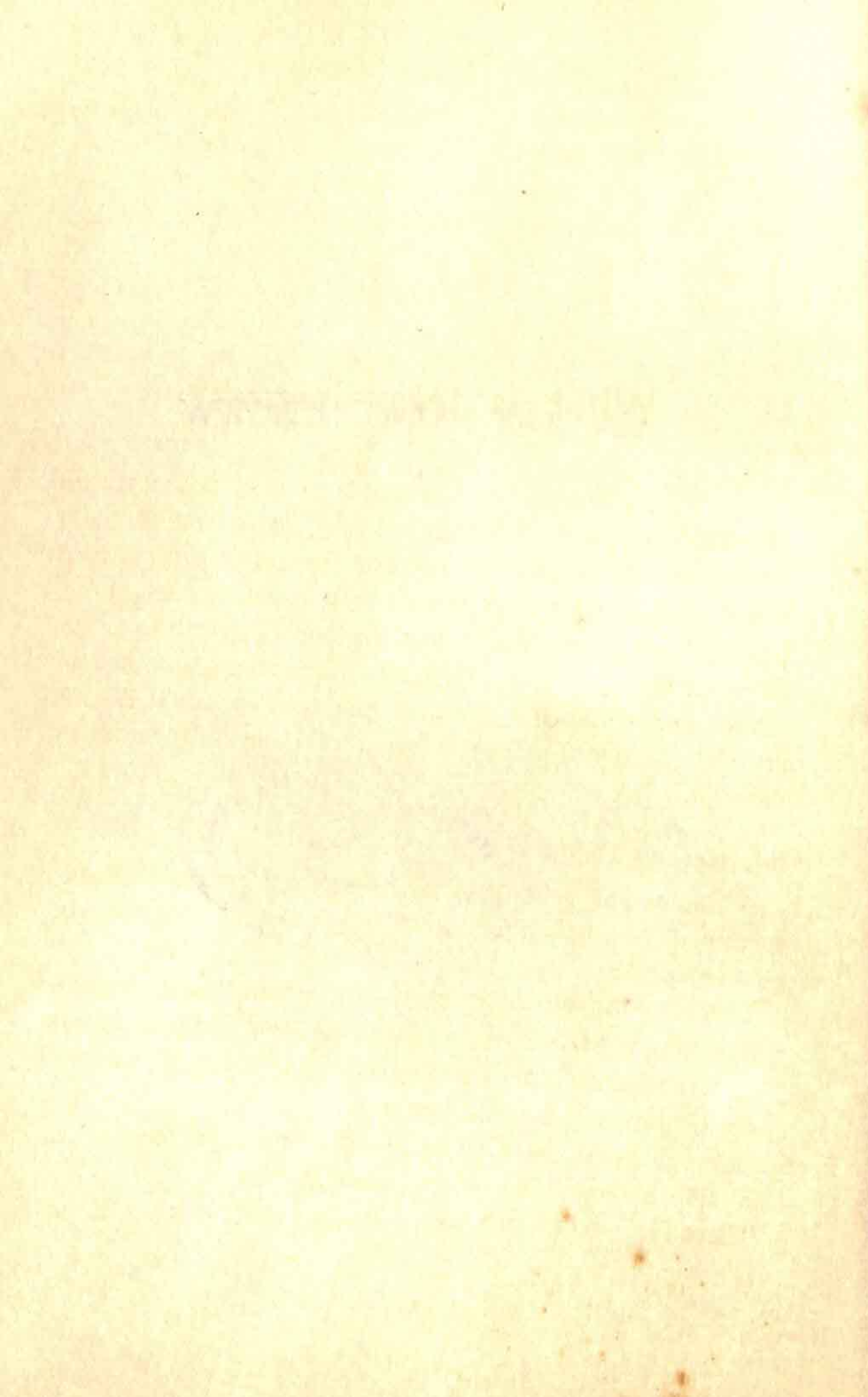
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# The COUNSELING INTERVIEW





# 1

## What Is Interviewing?

ALL OF US engage in some types of interviewing every day. Though we may not recognize these discussions as interviews, we are nevertheless constantly using good or poor interviewing tools. Our success on our job may be largely determined by our effectiveness in an interviewing situation. Certainly there are many people whose vocational and personal effectiveness could be increased through the improvement of their skills in interviewing.

### Interviewing Defined

A number of definitions might be used for the term interview. Nearly all of them have several elements in common.

1. A face-to-face meeting, usually a formal consultation.
2. A face-to-face conversation between individuals attempting to arrive at the solution of some problem.
3. A conversation with a purpose.
4. A conversation directed to a definite purpose other than satisfaction in the meeting itself.

There are many different kinds of interviews. These

## WHAT IS INTERVIEWING?

varying kinds will be considered in brief in the following pages. This book is primarily concerned, however, with one kind of interviewing—the counseling interview. *A counseling interview is a person-to-person relationship in which one individual with problems and needs turns to another person for assistance.*

### Types of Interviews

The past few years have witnessed a great deal of conflict in regard to interviewing. Books and lectures on the subject have resounded with the pronouncements of the enthusiasts of one school of thought or another. There have been some desirable by-products and a lot of good energy wasted.

We need first to recognize that people participate in different types or kinds of interviews. They do this because they have different *purposes* that an interview can serve. The following list illustrates some of the different kinds of interviews.

1. *The employment interview.* The purpose of this meeting is to determine an applicant's suitability for a specific job. The welfare of the company largely determines the conduct and the emphasis of the interview. The qualifications for the job have been established and the purpose of the interview is to determine how well the interviewee meets these demands.

2. *The informational interview.* On the one hand, the interviewee needs and is primarily interested in getting some information. Which medical schools are located in New York City? Are three years of English required for graduation? What jobs in this community are open to non-



## WHAT IS INTERVIEWING?

high school graduates? On the other hand, this type of interview is used by the counselor or the representative of a business to secure information. The interviews carried on by the various "pollsters" represent an information-gathering type. The primary purpose of this type of interviewing is to give or to secure some needed information.

3. *The disciplinary or administrative interview.* This type of interview is used to "require" changes in behavior. The welfare of the organization as well as the interviewee is involved. Policies are stated and interpreted, and action is taken.

4. *The counseling interview.* This represents a quite different emphasis from the three types previously described. The welfare of the individual is the primary issue involved. The counselor and the counselee are centrally interested in the solution of the counselee's difficulties. The counselor is vigorously concerned with assisting the counselee to learn how to carry his own responsibilities in a more effective way.

### The Counseling Interview

This book is primarily concerned with the procedures of the counseling interview. Much of the existing disagreement and debate has grown out of confusion in terminology and concept in regard to the purposes to be served by the interview. The counseling interview has several particular characteristics:

1. It is a person-to-person relationship.
2. One participant (interviewer) has assumed or has been assigned the responsibility of helping the other participant.
3. The interviewee has some needs, problems, blocks, or frustrations he wants to attempt to change or satisfy.

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4. The welfare of the interviewee is of central concern.
5. Both participants are interested and willing to attempt to find some solutions to the interviewee's difficulties.

The counseling interview varies in purposes, characteristics, and outcomes according to the basic needs to be served. The interview might be introductory (get acquainted), evaluative (appraisal), information-getting, information-giving, or for treatment (therapeutic) purposes.

### Purposes of Interviewing

There are several purposes to be served by the counseling interview. Because of the individualized nature of each meeting, the purposes will vary. Each counselor and counselee will need to determine what the purposes of *their* interview should be. The interview will, in general, encompass the following purposes.

1. *Establish rapport.* It is essential that counselor and counselee get acquainted in the best possible manner. These early contacts do much to condition later success. The desirability of the rapport established provides the foundation upon which the rest of the interview is built.

2. *Release tensions.* Many interviewees bring considerable emotional tension to the meeting. The interview can provide a desirable way to "let off steam." Little constructive work can be done until the counselee has had a chance to express and to examine many of these tensions. Some interviews can serve their counseling functions by this procedure. The counselee has a chance to "unload." In this process he has an opportunity to examine his ideas and feelings with a little more objectivity. As a result, he can suggest and carry out plans that he should find helpful.



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3. *Provide information.* Nearly all counselees are in need of information at some stage of the interview. The counselor (as a counselor) should have an abundance of information of concern to many of his clients. The interview is a logical place for imparting such information. It is assumed that in doing so he will follow sound principles of teaching and learning.

The counselor is in need of much information about the counselee if he is to be of real assistance. The interview is one of the very best ways to get some kinds of information. At almost all times during the interview, the counselor and the counselee will be adding to their stock of helpful information.

Both participants will use the interview to test, to verify, and to evaluate their information. The interview affords one of the best situations for the counselor to appraise, supplement, validate, test, discard, and note for further study information about the counselee.

4. *Encourage self-understanding.* Almost every counselee will need a better understanding of himself. He has most of the abilities and aptitudes to solve his own problems and yet he seems unable to make satisfactory progress. The counselor can use the interview to:

- a. Help the counselee *identify, mobilize, and organize* his problem-solving abilities and aptitudes.
- b. Help him obtain a more intensive and extensive picture of himself.
- c. Help him understand himself in relationship to previous environmental circumstances and to appraise the effects of possible environmental change.
- d. Help him to understand his rate of effectiveness or

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"operational efficiency." He needs to know how well he has used his abilities.

5. *Encourage constructive planning.* The major purpose of the counseling interview is to help the counselee develop and carry out better plans for the future. Nearly all other activities are peripheral to this. The first item of importance in an evaluation of the interview should be the extent to which the counselee develops and implements more intelligent plans.

### Some Approaches to Interviewing

As has been indicated, there are several schools of thought and practice regarding interviewing. Some of these differences have arisen from the different backgrounds of the counselors and the different responsibilities assigned to them. Each approach has some significant contributions to make and each undoubtedly has some serious limitations.

#### Background Analysis

This approach is very widely used. It utilizes a "case study" or "personal history" philosophy. It holds that an understanding of the counselee's background will provide the clues to his present behavior; that *what he has been* tells us *what he now is*; that early life experiences heavily condition present behavior. This approach is used almost exclusively by many counselors.

The validity of this method depends upon:

1. The ability of the counselor and the counselee to secure quite complete and accurate information regarding the counselee's life up to the present.
2. The ability of both participants to identify those ex-



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periences which have had important effects on the counselee.

3. The extent to which (in each case) background influences are of supreme importance over present circumstances and over motivations induced by future possibilities.

The case-history approach demands a high level of counselor competence. It deals with subtle and disguised personality elements. It necessitates the gathering of tremendous amounts of information. It may sometimes give undue emphasis to past conditions and irrelevant personal testimony.

### Counselor-Directed Interviewing

This approach encourages the counselor to assume the initiative and much of the responsibility for diagnosis and for treatment. It has been extensively employed in many clinics and is widely used by administrators operating under the cloak of counseling. It assumes, in many cases correctly, that the maturity, experience, information, and training of the counselor should be put to good use. This is accomplished by assigning to the counselor a major leadership role in the interview.

This approach can often be helpful:

1. If the counselee has reached a state of desperation and needs "a strong shoulder" before getting started on his own power.
2. If the counselee lacks starting ability in the interview and someone needs to turn the starting switch.
3. If the counselor can and should assume most of the responsibility for procedures to be followed later.



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4. If the evidence is rather clear and certain concerning the problem and its solution.
5. If the counselee can and will accept the results of the interview and will not lose his own self-directive powers in the process.

The following statements illustrate the major characteristics of the counselor-directed interview, sometimes referred to as directive interviewing.

1. The counselor assumes a large part of the responsibility for the solution of the counselee's problems.
2. The counselee accepts this counseling relationship.
3. The counselor collects information about the case.
4. The counselee provides information, takes tests, fills out blanks.
5. The counselor studies and interprets data.
6. The counselor and the counselee study the information, analyze the causes of difficulty, and then formulate solutions.
7. The counselee decides on plans for the future and begins to implement these decisions.
8. The counselor records the interview and follows up the case.

On the other hand, this approach has many real danger spots. It should not be used:

1. If the counselee finds it possible to shift to the counselor what should be his responsibilities.
2. If the problem has emotional complications and this procedure may neglect some most important aspects of the interview.

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3. If the evidence is not clear and the procedures to be followed are uncertain.
4. If the initiative of the counselee and his relations to the counselor will be hampered.

### Counselee-Directed Interviewing

This approach places in the hands of the counselee the opportunity and the responsibility for the direction of the interview. The outcomes are the counselee's. The counselor is primarily an interested listener, a sympathetic "ear," a reflector of counselee ideas and feelings.

This method has sometimes been labeled as "non-directive." Its advocates claim that the counselee has the necessary resources to solve his own problems. They claim that the most effective therapy can result from this type of counselee propulsion.

The "non-directive" type of interviewing provides a warm, friendly, accepting atmosphere. In this atmosphere the counselee releases pent-up emotions, clarifies his own feelings, learns to understand his own reactions, and begins to accept himself. As a result, he can begin a reorganization of his perceptions of self and environment.

This approach is usually most helpful when:

1. The counselee is under considerable tension.
2. The counselee has several "emotional blocks" that prevent intellectual analysis.
3. The counselor is a highly skilled technician in the use of this method.
4. The solution to the counselee's problems requires him to assume considerable responsibility for decision and action.



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5. The probable causes of the difficulty are obscure and complicated.

This approach also has many limitations. It appears to be less useful when:

1. Interviewing time is limited and there are many counselees to be helped.
2. Counselors are not psychologically trained as skillful clinicians.
3. The difficulty does not involve too much tension or emotional stress.
4. The problems reflect a need for further information by the counselee or an opportunity for an *objective* analysis with a skillful counselor.

This method of interviewing is characterized by the following steps:

1. The counselee voluntarily applies for help by referral, or at the suggestion of someone else.
2. The counselor expresses a willingness to try to be of assistance.
3. The counselee may try to shift the responsibility to the counselor. The counselor assigns the responsibility for the solution of the problem to the counselee.
4. The counselee either accepts the responsibility for solving his own problem or withdraws from the interviewing procedure.
5. If the counselee accepts the responsibility for the solution of his problem, the counselor then explains to him that the counseling situation provides an opportunity for the counselee, with assistance, to work out a solution of his problem.

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6. The counselee is given every opportunity to express himself freely.
7. The counselor accepts, recognizes, clarifies, restates, and objectifies the statements of the counselee.
8. The counselee begins to develop insight and to understand himself more objectively.
9. The counselor diagnoses or interprets the counselee's statements but he does not express his own feelings, ideas, or interpretations.
10. The counselee begins to formulate suggestions for the solution of his own problem.
11. The counselee makes decisions and begins to carry out his decisions.

### The Cooperative Approach

Another method (or combination of methods) is rapidly growing in use. This growth comes from a recognition by the "on-the-job" counselor that he has always had to use a variety of approaches. That even a single interview has made necessary the employment of almost all his interviewing tools. He has found that excessive adherence to any one approach gave him a tendency to be less flexible and less observant than necessary.

The cooperative approach is built upon a number of ideas. These would include such statements as:

1. The interview provides a joint opportunity and responsibility for release, diagnosis, planning, and implementation. The extent or degree of participation by interviewer and interviewee will vary and shift in accordance with individual considerations.
2. Both participants are interested in and have some responsibility for the outcomes of the interview.



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3. Both participants will contribute to an understanding of the purposes of the interview and the respective roles to be played.
4. Both participants will need to use accepted principles of learning in order that the outcomes may be most fruitful.
5. Both participants recognize the *right* and the *responsibility* of the *counselee* to *make* and to *carry out* the decisions and plans.

### The Good Counselor

The characteristics of an effective counselor can be described in such terms as:

1. A good counselor needs to know and be able to use all these methods.
2. A good counselor needs to be able skillfully to "shift gears" from one method to another. Each interview will be different and the methods used should be most appropriate to that interview.
3. A good counselor uses the "tools" that he finds will work best for him.
4. A good counselor is a highly skilled artist and can only remain such by constant study and improvement.
5. A good counselor must adjust the interview to the level or "pitch" of the situation, from the simple giving of information to the more involved emotional and mental cases.

### A Point of View

An intelligent counselor can find much of value in the different philosophies and techniques that have been pre-



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sented. He will learn to use those that "work best" for him. He will learn to modify and temper. He will learn that an "either-or" attitude does not produce the best results. He will learn that it is better to work *with* counselees rather than to operate in isolation. He will learn that many theories break down in practice and that the manifold demands of each day preclude doing many of the things he would like to do. He will learn that differences in organization and purpose require different counselor habits. He will learn not to expect too much and to be satisfied if the counselee learns to crawl before he learns to run.

He will also learn to appraise his own characteristics, aspirations, disappointments, frustrations, and experiences. In full consciousness of this information he will use those techniques which best fit him and the counselee. He will continually guard against himself and protect the interview for the welfare of the counselee.

The counselor will view the interview as a changing, growing, and unique experience. He will so guide his participation that the interview may most nearly fit the demands of each situation. He will regard the interview as a joint experience. Both participants must share in responsibility, opportunity, information gathering, exploration, planning. Each participant's role shifts and changes as the interview moves along.

But the counselor must always respect the counselee as a human being. Therefore, he will help the counselee maintain the integrity of his own person; he will insure the counselee's right and responsibility to make his own decisions and carry out his own plans. The counselor will at all times strive to help the counselee improve the quality of his own living.

## 2

### The Origin and Nature of Problems

ALL OF US have had and will continue to have problems. Some of these difficulties are individually induced; others are social problems which can only be cared for by group action. The counselor cannot help people avoid all their difficulties. However, a good counseling program can:

1. Help individuals avoid some unnecessary difficulties.
2. Help individuals avoid some of the unpleasant and undesirable consequences of continuing to live with frustrations that might be eliminated.
3. Help individuals detect and attempt to care for frustrations or difficulties of which they are not now aware.
4. Help individuals learn how to live with problems that must continue to be tolerated.
5. Help individuals to develop better problem-solving techniques and to learn through problem-solving experiences.
6. Help many people consider their problems and plans more seriously, develop more objective approaches, and learn how to identify and use helpful resources.



### Problems Are Normal

Counselors can be of real assistance if they can help their counselees understand the normality of having problems. Indeed, this is the first step in the elimination of problems. To have difficulty is normal, but a continuing failure to solve or to learn how to live with problems may lead to abnormality.

The counselor is interested in helping his counselees take the second step—to learn effective and desirable ways to release their tensions. Additional progress can then be made toward the identification and the objectification of these difficulties. The counselee will then be on the road toward self-directiveness. If counselees can acquire more objective approaches to their own situations, if they can learn to identify and control their emotional reactions, if they can apply some of the known information to their own situations, they are well on the road to more intelligent self-directiveness.

### Utilize Human Potentialities

Man is an adaptable and creative being. Each day brings a new appreciation of what he can do if his energies can be coordinated and directed. An individual usually possesses most of the abilities to solve his individual problems. His frustrations continue, not through any lack of ability on his part but through failure to use his abilities wisely. The counselor can contribute greatly by:

1. Helping the counselee identify the abilities and talents he might use to solve his problems.
2. Helping him mobilize and strengthen these abilities.

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3. Helping him organize his strengths into and through a program of constructive action.

Any counseling program worthy of the name will recognize these human resources. Every effort will be made to help the counselee inventory his considerable "personal capital." Such an approach will stress the counselee's opportunity, responsibility, and aptitude for caring for many of his own difficulties.

### Problems Exist in Clusters

There is increasing evidence to indicate the multiplicity of problems. Problems tend to gather or center into groups of difficulties. A single frustration may easily cause several other maladjustments in other areas of life. We more commonly find several difficulties rather than a single basic irritation. This fact is in opposition to the theories of much counseling practice that attempts to identify *the* problem. As a result many of the attempts to classify or categorize problems on the single-problem theory are inaccurate and tend to distort the real nature of the difficulties.

If a person is troubled, it is likely that his troubles spill over into and become involved in several widely varying areas of his living. Just as his problems are apt to occur in clusters, so are the causes of these problems manifold. It is dangerous, therefore, for the counselor to attempt too much of a simplification either of problems or of the factors causing them.

### Each Problem Is Different

Each interview is a new and unique situation. Each problem or personal difficulty also demands individual con-



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sideration. It is essential, therefore, that the counselor and the counselee approach the discussion in a flexible and pioneering manner. The exploration, analysis, planning, and execution of plans must be tailor-made to fit the client and the multitudinous factors of his environment.

### Problems Have Histories

Many of our difficulties have cumulative backgrounds. When problems are presented to the counselor they usually have had a long period of incubation. The counselor and the counselee may mistake current irritations for basic causes. It is essential, therefore, that some consideration be given to the characteristics of developing maladjustments. The following process illustrates how *some* problems come to the attention of the counselor.

1. A frustration is encountered that is of sufficient irritation, strength, or importance to be recognized by the individual.
2. The individual, in an attempt to maintain his own self-respect, tries those solutions which he can devise by himself.
3. Each unsuccessful attempt to solve his own difficulties adds to his feeling of frustration and contributes to his emotional tensions.
4. These experiences (self-attempts at solution) may become accepted (by the individual) as basic causes for his difficulties.
5. If the problem persists and if its solution seems sufficiently important, the individual will turn to someone else for assistance. The original irritation may have been lost in the experiences of the counselee in his



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attempts to find solutions to his problems. At this point the counselor often meets the counselee for the first time.

### Drive for Self-Directiveness

Counselors often fail to recognize the counselee's fundamental drives toward increasing self-directiveness. All rational people want to achieve a maximum of control over their own activities. The counselee will usually not trust a counselor who is "hungry for control." If the counselee shifts responsibility to the counselor, he does it in order to win some other freedoms and controls.

The counselee will react to this drive for self-directiveness in several ways. He may withhold information or distort the information he does provide. In that way he avoids letting the counselor attain an equal informational rank. On the other hand, the counselee may accept all of the interview and then follow a directly reverse set of procedures. This again is one way for him to maintain his own independence.

The drive for self-directiveness must be recognized and encouraged. Intelligent self-directiveness represents one of the most important outcomes of the interview. The counselor is interested in:

1. Identifying the strength of the counselee's drive for self-control.
2. Accepting as few as possible of the counselee's responsibilities.
3. Clarifying with the counselee his responsibility for planning and action.
4. Attempting to increase the counselee's scope of control.

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### Emotions Influence Adjustment

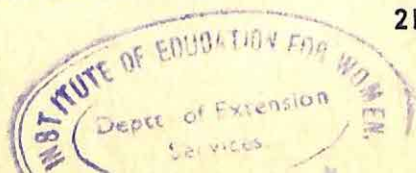
Many counselors are just beginning to recognize the tremendous role played by the emotions. All too often, problems have been approached like geometry theorems. The energy of the counselor was directed toward the intellectualization and objectification of the factors in the situation. This procedure has frequently failed because it neglected the emotional aspects of the case.

Almost all human problems will have some emotional involvements. Therefore, we must guide our counseling activities by the counselee's *thoughts* and also by his *feelings*. This would necessitate such procedures as:

1. An attempt to identify the nature and extent of emotional factors.
2. An early opportunity in the interview for the counselee to "let off steam."
3. A continuous effort by the counselor to help the counselee move more of the factors in his case from the "feeling" to the "thinking" area.
4. Recognition by both participants that it may be necessary for the counselee to get some new experiences in certain areas. This may be necessary before he can objectify some of his reactions.

### Verbalization Is Difficult

Inadequate attention has been given to the limitations of speech as a means of expressing our problems. Recent developments in the field of semantics have shown the general limitations of words, but this handicap is probably further intensified when we are dealing with the highly





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personal problems of people. We must appreciate such factors as the following:

1. The two participants in the interview come from different backgrounds. They have, therefore, great difficulty in speaking a common language.
2. Many of our personal problems are difficult to verbalize. We find it hard to express our emotional reactions through speech. We are not fully conscious of all our maladjustments. We hesitate to tell another person about some of our limitations and experiences.
3. Slight variations of shading, emphasis, and meaning are of very great importance and may indicate vital information, or we may entirely miss these differences in meaning.
4. The counselee may find that his oral expressions have indicated impressions quite different from those he intended to convey. The two participants may be thinking in two different worlds of ideas.

### Locate Causes, Not Symptoms

It is easy for a counselor to mistake *effect* for *cause*. All too often the results have been treated and the basic causes have gone unstudied and unrecognized. This kind of counseling is almost futile. The maladjustment continues or is expressed in some other way. The counselee is no nearer an understanding of his problems. It should be remembered that:

1. Inadequate behavior indicates the presence of frustrations and difficulties—it does not identify the source or the nature of the conditions responsible for this

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behavior. Early attempts at classification may be very inaccurate.

2. The same basic cause may express itself in several quite different kinds of behavior.
3. The counselor and the counselee must be primarily concerned with basic causes. Inadequate behavior is usually an indication that a study should be made to locate causes of such behavior.
4. Classification of causes on the basis of resultant behavior is neither accurate nor apt to prove a productive counseling approach. Such classifications are inaccurate because they are based on results rather than reasons.

## Dramatics and the Interview

Each interview has many of the characteristics of a creative dramatic production. The roles are played by the counselor and his client. The props (setting) are furnished by the counselor's office. Both participants have to a greater or lesser degree prepared some of their lines. The counselor may have examined the cumulative record or may have been told about the case. The client may have heard about and have formed certain impressions of the counselor. The counselor's reputation has often been relayed to the client prior to the interview.

As the play begins, each actor attempts to explore and form judgments about the other. Each one may try to test the other by using "leads." The old "red herring" device may be employed. Neither participant will tell too much or reveal too much until an accepted and a firm relationship has been established. Each person builds his own shell and



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shapes his role for personal security and enhancement. The skillful counselor should be aware of these interview characteristics. He should play his part sincerely, intelligently, alertly, and with full comprehension of the ground that is being covered. He must be aware of the acts that are still to be performed.

A counselor must also be aware of the dynamics and the intricacies involved in this delicate human relationship. He must be able to appraise and understand the role each counselee is playing. He must retain a flexible and creative approach or many of the subtle implications will go unrecognized.

### **Appraise Counseling Readiness**

A somewhat new concept is appearing in publications for professional guidance workers. It is based on a point of view that has been widely accepted in the teaching of reading and other educational fields. This concept is fully in accord with present-day educational philosophy. It is believed that effective counselors can no longer avoid serious consideration of the client's motivation for counseling. Many of our efforts have been wasted because our counselees were not yet ready for the assistance we were ready to provide. Therefore, we must consider more carefully the readiness of the individual. This is as true before the interview begins as it is during the entire interviewing process. His readiness for assistance is an important part of his own self-understanding. It is essential that the client as well as the counselor recognize the most appropriate times to "get going."



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### Types of Adjustment

Counselees may need one or more of three types of assistance. These three types are not mutually exclusive but they do represent centers of emphasis during the interview. The counselor must be alert to the characteristics and needs of the individual counselee so that each client may receive the assistance most appropriate in his case.

### Orientation Information

Some clients are in need of specific information. They may need to know about colleges, job trends, or occupational opportunities. The counselor can be of help by providing the information or by helping the client learn where the information can be found. This type of counseling is less involved. The counselor needs to be sure that the most relevant of the client's problems are dealt with, that the information suggested is as valid as possible, and that the client continues to carry the responsibility for his own decisions.

### Adjustive Assistance

Some of the counselees need help in learning to adjust to some conditions they can do little to change. A part of the process of growing up includes fitting our behavior to the mores and customs of our social groups. Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr aptly expressed this point of view when he said:

God grant me the serenity  
To accept the things I cannot change;  
The courage to change the things I can;  
And the wisdom to know the difference.

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### Developmental Counseling

A third type of counseling stresses the growth of the counselee. Counseling is thus conceived as a basic and important educational experience.

1. The counselor is primarily interested in increasing the counselee's span of self-control and self-direction.
2. The interview itself is considered a helpful educational experience.
3. The counselee should be learning problem-solving skills that can be used on the problems of the future.
4. The counselor is interested in helping the counselee learn how to get along successfully without the assistance of counselors.

### Steps in Adjustment<sup>1</sup>

Our ability to arrive at some state of adjustment with or without help is based on five steps spread over many years of our lives.

1. We learn what kind of behavior is expected of us from our parents, our teachers, friends, employers, and all people in our immediate environment. We find out what is acceptable and what kind of behavior will meet society's general standards.
2. We accumulate facts about ourselves. In other words, we come to find out what things we like and don't like, what our abilities are, and where our strengths and weaknesses lie. Generally speaking, we are not too objective or accurate in collecting these facts, and if they are too damaging to our self-esteem we build up defenses against them. These facts are added up to give us a composite picture of ourselves as we believe others see us; we are fairly hard workers; people

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<sup>1</sup> "The Interview in Counseling," Retraining and Reemployment Administration, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1946, pp. 4-5.



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like us pretty well; people don't recognize our true worth; our best work is done when we work alone.

3. Sometimes our picture of ourself is in conflict with what society expects of us. The person who cannot resolve this conflict in a socially and personally acceptable way may become anxious and worried; he may turn to others for help in solving his problems. But ultimately we all must try in adulthood to reach a satisfactory relation with society and with ourselves.
4. We study our relation to society to find out what import it carries for the future; in other words, we use it to predict things to come, and when necessary we attempt to change certain parts of the picture. If we are not in good health, we get a doctor to put us back in shape. If we need more training to reach a particular goal, we sign up for an extension course. In a few years, we will build that house we have been planning on, if we can learn to save a little money.
5. Ever so often, we stop to check up, or if we have made a mistake, somebody may check up on us. For instance, if we have made a mistake about our real abilities, our boss may fire us, and we have to change jobs. If we have made a mistake in choosing a training program, we may get poor grades or quit school. If we have found that our friends are no longer our friends, we may have overestimated our own personality or our thoughtfulness.

These steps are inevitable in the process of living. A trained counselor is no more than a person who, because of special training, may help us do in a short time what we by ourselves might spend many years in doing. An untrained person cannot be of much help, since we know ourselves better than he does. A partly trained counselor may be helpful only to the extent of asking questions and raising issues in such a way that we will go out and get the answers from better-trained people. He may also be effective because we can use him as a sounding board for a discussion of our own problem. We all feel an occasional



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desire to talk things over, and a good listener is still a handy thing to have around.

### Frustration and Behavior

A conflict occurs when a person finds that his usual behavior patterns are not sufficient to help him attain some desired goal. When this occurs, the individual may resort to any of a number of types of behavior.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Direct attack.* The individual continues toward his goal, attempting to meet the difficulty by applying added effort to the same method of solution. This may lead to "Racing one's motor." The individual might also try an improved method of approach evolved by trial and error, informal insight, or the analytical, objective approach, according to the degree of difficulty in the problem.

2. *Flank Attack.* The individual takes a detour to his original goal, and avoids the barrier that stands in his way.

3. *Escape.* If no method of overcoming the difficulty is apparent, energy may be diverted in other directions. The person may deny the existence or importance of the problem that he faces or stall in his attempt to find a solution to his problem.

4. *Diversion.* Behavior may take the form of aggression against the obstacle or difficulty itself.

5. *Partial solutions or compromises.* There are many partial solutions that people use to meet a problem and to relieve tension during frustration. These are called mechanisms, and Mr. Seashore has classified them into twelve general types. These twelve that are given are "normal" forms of behavior that people in difficulty frequently hit upon. Some are much more appropriate and effective than others in various circumstances. But they all represent alternative courses of action for situations in which analytic approaches are either not known or are too expensive in time and energy.

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<sup>2</sup> "Problem Solving Behavior in Conflict Situations," *Guidance Newsletter* (Chicago: Science Research Associates, May, 1946), p. 3.

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- a. *Overcompensation.* Motivation for original problem is far more than necessary. May make a person socially ridiculous unless directed into socially acceptable channels.
- b. *Rationalization.* The process of distorting one's reasoning about the problem. It may take the form of giving a socially acceptable motive instead of the real one, denying the value of the original goal, or building up the value of an inferior substitute goal.
- c. *Substitute activities.* In a frustrating situation an individual may substitute another goal for his original one. If the motivation is redirected into a socially acceptable channel, it is called sublimation. If, however, it is redirected into a socially unacceptable channel, it is called perversion.
- d. *Identification.* This is the process in which an individual allies himself emotionally with people who can succeed where he himself has failed.
- e. *Projection.* Projecting blame for failure to achieve one's goal on some other person or thing.
- f. *Egocentrism.* Getting some kind of attention, even if unfavorable, as a symbol of social approval.
- g. *Sympathism.* Getting someone else to assist with the problem or at least pay some attention to one, in case of failure.
- h. *Regression.* Reverting to role of a younger (less experienced) person (child, novice, or invalid) so that one will not be expected to solve the problem. Usually used with sympathism.
- i. *Dissociation.* Splitting up the problem and dealing with one or several parts separately. A bogus solution if the essence of the problem is the harmonizing of the parts. Known as "logic-tight compartments."
- j. *Negativism.* Refusing to do anything about the problem, or being contrary and doing the opposite of socially accepted action.
- k. *Repression.* Inhibiting overt activity by diverting motivation to implicit activities-thinking and emotional activities.
- l. *Phantasy.* Daydreaming imaginary solutions in a dream world instead of facing realities in situation.



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### Detecting Problems

Every counselor faces the responsibility of identifying some of the factors that may be creating problems not yet recognized by the client. Some of the indications of such problems are:

1. Individuals showing unusual tensions.
2. Individual behavior varying widely from the mores of his group.
3. Individuals continually unable to decide on a course of action, unable to come to decisions.
4. Individuals showing extreme lack of interest or enthusiasm.
5. Individuals continually resorting to attention-getting or overly aggressive behavior.
6. Individuals overcompensating by excess enthusiasms, extreme devotion to typical hobbies or interests.
7. Individuals whose goals and possibilities are not in harmony.
8. Individuals showing lack of faith in self, overdependence on others.
9. Individuals not making progress commensurate with their aims.
10. Individuals showing sudden and contradictory changes in behavior.
11. Individuals resorting to antisocial or infantile behavior.
12. Individuals whose abilities and interests are regularly not being utilized.
13. Individuals unable to make adequate social adjustments anywhere along the line.
14. Individuals who regularly fail and who seldom have any opportunities for success experiences.



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15. Individuals who have built handicapping habits or attitudes.
16. Individuals whose basic needs are insufficiently cared for.

### How To Determine Importance of Problems

It is vitally important for the interviewee and the interviewer to gauge the nature and seriousness of the problems facing the interviewee. This knowledge will be helpful in guiding the course of the interview and will also indicate the needed therapy. The following questions will help to determine the importance of the problems.

1. How basic is the need or desire that has been blocked? If the need is essential to continued well-being, it must be cared for. If it represents a minor need, other satisfactions may suffice.
2. How many needs or desires are being blocked? The individual may face a disheartening array of discomforts.
3. How long has the problem existed? If the maladjustment has continued for a long period, the resulting behavior may be very deeply "grooved." The individual may have built many compensations. The original difficulty may be hidden or lost in the intervening experiences. It may be much more difficult to detect the original causes of the present difficulties.
4. To what extent is the interviewee aware of his problems? The interviewee may be able to identify his difficulties with some accuracy. On the other hand, he may not understand at all the real causes for his maladjustments. He may have built an extended series

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of explanations that have little relationship to the real facts.

5. How much flexibility of movement does the interviewee have? In some cases he may have a number of alternatives. In others, he may be greatly restricted by the lack of environmental alternatives. In all cases, it is important for the interviewer and the interviewee to be acquainted with the fluidity of the situation.
6. How creative is the interviewee? He may be quite unable to devise solutions or he may be very inventive. He may be very rigid in his thinking or very flexible in his approach.

### The Counselee Decides

There has been a great deal of discussion regarding the role each participant should play in the interviewing process. Counselors have been charged with "making decisions for others" and "running other people's lives." On the other hand, they have also been accused of indecisive, willy-nilly, unresponsive, and uninterested participation.

The responsibility for decision and action must rest with the counselee. It is his life to lead. The successes and the errors must be his. No one other than the counselee can assume these burdens.

The counselor can provide helpful information. He can assist in exploration and analysis. He can encourage counselee creativity. He can even make suggestions. But the final decisions and plans must be those of the counselee. No other procedure can succeed.



# 3

## Suggestions to Interviewers

IT HAS ALREADY been suggested that each interview should be developed as a unique experience. The counselor must be more concerned with the internal consistency of the interview than with his attempts to adhere to the "party line" or to implement rigidly any particular school of thought. It is not possible, therefore, to formulate a specific set of rules or procedures that can be followed in most interviews. Each counselor will need to modify the following material in accordance with the characteristics of the current case.

### Closing the Gap

Counselors need to consider the ways in which they can contact their clients at an earlier time. Too much time now intervenes between the occurrence (cause of problem) and the counselor's awareness of a difficulty. School children go on for years with frustrations that could and should have had earlier consideration. An alertness to the barely perceptible emerging signs of maladjustment will stand the counselor in good stead. Some of the materials in Chapter 2 have already suggested several ways in which this gap



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between the cause of the problem and the counselor's attention to it might be narrowed.

In a school situation, the counselor can be of real staff service at this point. He can work with all the teachers to help them learn how to detect and do something about early maladjustment. It is obvious that the elementary school plays a most important role. Many of the frustrations that evidence themselves in high school and college have their origins in the elementary schools.

### Counseling Requires Individual Work

Rothney and Roens<sup>1</sup> have clearly expressed the personalized and individualized nature of effective counseling activities.

Counseling must always be an individualized affair, and group guidance techniques must always be supplementary and secondary aids. The word "always" is used advisedly for the foundation of counseling is found in the fact that there are personal choices to be made. In many cases there may be situations and patterns of development which require similar choices, but, in the last analysis, there must be some one person who accepts the responsibility of helping this particular individual to analyze his unique personal problems. To such situations someone must bring *particularized* knowledge obtained from records, observations, and tests, and someone must interpret it. Someone must answer a student's specific questions, and someone must raise particular questions that he may not have raised about himself. Someone must interpret to each student separately the specialized educational and vocational implications which he, because of his lack of experience and knowledge, is unable to recognize, and someone must help each student to appreciate the social and domestic circumstances of his particular characteristics and situation.

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<sup>1</sup> John W. M. Rothney and Bert A. Roens, *Counseling the Individual Student*. New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1949, pp. 4-5.

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Someone with quick personal perceptions and a sympathetic interest in human difficulties must help a student to help himself when he finds that he is confronted with problems beyond his power to solve. And someone must *care* about him in such circumstances. All such activities could be carried through by many teachers if time were made available and training for such tasks were required for professional certification, but most teachers have a heavy class load and are insufficiently trained to be other than helpers in such assignments. It is these *personalized* tasks, then, that the counselor, who has only a token teaching assignment and who has had specific training, will undertake.

### Inspire Confidence

No counselor can be effective unless he has the trust of his client. It is important, therefore, for the counselor to develop skills and attitudes that make such confidence possible.

1. Be genuinely interested in people—if you are not so inclined, get into another line of work. A counselor needs to have a real interest in *helping* people.
2. Give the client your direct and undivided attention.
3. Don't show evidence of too much curiosity.
4. Be sure to let the client talk—listen carefully and prove to him that you are listening by repeating some of his ideas.
5. Accept without shock the things he has to tell you.
6. Don't give him the feeling he is being shunted off to someone else.

### Provide for Exploration and Analysis

The interview offers an excellent opportunity for investigative exploration. The counselor has a chance to help the client delve into most of the important areas that might be



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related to his problems. This should result in a quick screening of many possible causes of difficulty. Both participants have an opportunity to gain some perspective regarding the over-all picture. Items for further study are uncovered. Hunches, and in some cases even insight, are achieved. Each individual item can be contrasted against the entire background of information. Some emotional release is provided when the whole situation is studied, because individual irritations become of lesser importance.

In many ways, an interview resembles the construction of a new building. A firm foundation needs to be established. In an interview, this foundation can best be laid by widespread exploration of many areas of the client's life. Subsequent detailed studies are then related to this broad base. Specific bits of information take their rightful place as a *part* of a large picture. Each new exploratory venture can be checked and related to the broad foundation.

This type of exploratory activity will usually precede detailed analysis and future planning. A firm foundation is established upon which the rest of the interview can be built. There is less likelihood that some important factor will be overlooked if such an exploratory canvass of the situation is carried on.

### Avoid Classifications

There is a natural tendency for all of us to classify, name, label, apply titles, and stigmatize. Things appear good or bad, bright or dark, promising or discouraging. Many of these names and classifications involve social and ego status. This tendency toward name identification should be avoided for these reasons:



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1. It may lead to diagnosis based upon insufficient evidence and resulting from the predominance of single items of information.
2. Most of the clients have problems that do not *fit* the boxes we have so neatly arranged. As a result, we sometimes try to shape or alter the evidence to fit our patterns.
3. Such classification may discourage the client, may cause him to distrust the counselor, may provide some artificial crutches for him to lean on, and may handicap the freedom and flexibility of the rest of the interview.

### Client Needs Freedom of Expression

It is essential that the counselor allow the client to tell his own story as he wants it told. Such a free expression of the problem gives the client needed emotional release. Furthermore, he needs to verbalize his situation in order to gain insight, to become more objective, and to retain the responsibility for his own difficulties. Meanwhile, the counselor has an opportunity to study and to understand the content, the semantics, and the feelings of the client.

### Build on Strengths

The interview will result in more positive action if the emphasis is placed on strengths and possibilities rather than weaknesses and limitations. Nearly every client needs to attain more self-confidence. He needs to express some things of which he could be proud. He needs to feel that there are some doors still open.

The counselor can be of assistance in guiding the conversation along such channels as will provide these results. In too many cases, the client has already lost some con-

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fidence. He is already somewhat blinded by emotional blocks. He has already underestimated his abilities and aptitudes. On the other hand, his problems and difficulties have attained unwarranted importance. His inability to care for his problems may have intensified his feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. The counselor can be of assistance by helping to restore *balance* and *perspective* to the client and his situation.

### Avoid Selling

The interview is not a business transaction. The counselor is not a salesman. It is essential that the counselor keep his position clearly in mind. Any attempt by the counselor to push or insist on a specific point of view or plan will create suspicion in the client's mind. Any selling program by the counselor tends to remove some of the client's feeling of responsibility for his own problems and plans. There is a tendency for the client to accept and to act on only those ideas which he has sold to himself. Furthermore, the counselor seldom has enough information to be sure of what is best for the client. The counselor is interested in helping his client develop and sell himself on better plans and procedures.

### Guard against Yourself

The counselor is often his own worst enemy. He fails to take into account normal human motivations. Every individual has his own ideas and prejudices; his unfulfilled aims and aspirations; his bitter and disappointing past experiences; his defects and limitations. All these and many other personal characteristics begin to operate during the interview.



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The counselor also has a degree of "ego involvement" in the interview. He wants to look good, too. As a result, he may carry on many activities that are satisfying to him but that may actually be a disadvantage to the client. When several counselors are questioned regarding a specific case, we often find many differences of opinion. These differences may reflect differences in the counselor rather than varying aspects of the counselee. The skilled counselor recognizes these human tendencies, attempts a major mastery of himself, and continually recognizes the primary importance of the counselee's welfare.

### Stop for Air

An interview can rather easily become disconnected, rambling, lacking in point or purpose. This happens when the counselor is afraid to give any direction to what is happening. It also occurs because the scope of the interview usually covers so many different topics, so large a block of time, and so many different events.

Periodic pauses help. When it seems that a particular topic has been covered, it is usually helpful to stop to take a look at the ground that has been covered. A short summary of major points will crystallize the more important things and provide a more definite framework for later planning. At many points, the client should be encouraged to undertake this summary. It is also desirable to review the situation to be sure no important items have been neglected.

### Use Referral Resources

Successful interviewing cannot be carried on without the use of many individuals and agencies. The counselor can-



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not and should not be expected to know or be able to do all the things that are required. In fact, it is very important that he recognize his own limitations and utilize the many specialized resources available. Again there is a certain amount of ego involvement that must be taken into account. A counselor will strengthen his work and gain the respect of the counselee if he will frankly admit that there are some things he does not know.

The effective use of these referral resources requires careful identification of agencies, the establishment of contacts with the personnel of the agencies, and the development of good working relationships. It is important for a counselor to do all these.

### Listen to "Theme Songs"

An alert counselor can learn a great deal by carefully noting the repetitious parts of the client's presentations. An idea, an attitude, an expression of feeling or a description of an incident of behavior will be repeated again and again. Such expressions may represent the more intense and most important reactions of the client; they may represent the areas of strong emotional involvement; and they may represent the picture or the particular reactions the client is trying to get the counselor to accept. These expressions should be noted by the counselor because they provide many clues regarding the most effective way to conduct the interview.

### Look for the Attainable

In many interviews there are forces tending to drive the analysis and planning toward ideal and often unrealistic goals. The counselor is interested in the client's best wel-

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fare. The client gets some ego satisfaction from lofty air castles. In some cases, the client intentionally blocks therapy by insisting on improbable aspirations. When this occurs, the counselor rather than the client is burdened with a failure that was almost certain from the start.

An interview should provide for some dreaming. It should also encourage as much *rock bottom realism* as possible. Little steps successfully completed lead to longer jumps. The counselor can do much to encourage the client to return occasionally to the "facts of life."

### Encourage Client Planning

At all times the counselor is interested in encouraging the client to create possible solutions to his own difficulties. This load of planning and decision-making must be carried by the client. Such activity represents the finest educational growth by the client.

The counselor serves as a stimulator. By the use of appropriate questions, by the provision of information, by the suggestion of possible courses of action, the counselor motivates the client to higher levels of activity. At all times the client is conscious of his responsibility for the solution of his difficulties. He is also assured and stimulated by the interest, the suggestions, and the cooperative spirit shown by the counselor. It is important for the counselor and the client to consider several alternative courses of action. Single-track plans are hazardous.

### Adhere to Professional Ethics

The counselor must remember that he is a professional worker. As such, he is subject to certain ethical considerations:



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1. He carefully safeguards the information he gathers.
2. He protects and encourages the integrity of the client.
3. He carefully limits the scope of his activities to those things he *can* and *should* do.
4. He does not engage in gossip or petty conversations.
5. He carefully adheres to professional practices in his discussions about and his relationships with his fellow workers.
6. He does not encourage the client to reveal more information than he voluntarily gives.
7. He does not attempt to gain control and use such control of the client.
8. He cheerfully refers the client to others when they can be more helpful.
9. He does not make or exact promises from the client.
10. He attempts to direct the interview in the light of valid and reasonable information and does not make suggestions without evidence.
11. He continually recognizes his own characteristics and tries to prevent mistakes that might grow out of unfettered personal desires.
12. He recognizes the need for continuous growth and engages in activities that improve his effectiveness.
13. He is unhurried in his work and at the same time is attempting to use his time wisely for the benefit of the greater number.
14. He is willing to face unpleasant facts and to help his client appraise these realities fairly.

### Look at the "Long Haul"

There are several important outcomes to be expected from the interview. The sincere counselor will try to achieve as many as possible.



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1. The client should grow in self-understanding.
2. The client should have an increased understanding of his present and past environment and its effects on him. He should appreciate what a changed environment might do for him.
3. The client should be more selective in analyzing those problems that may cure themselves in time and those that need diligent or immediate attention.
4. The client should have a clearer picture of long-term developments and possibilities. He should get an understanding of his interests and abilities as they have developed over a long period of time. This longitudinal picture of self and environment is necessary if any realistic planning is to be done.

### Encourage Client Satisfaction

An interview should have at least two important outcomes. The client should leave the interview with some *plans for action* and with some resolve to implement these plans through a program of *doing*.

Client satisfaction represents a most important outcome of the interview. The client has been bothered by frustration and insecurity. He needs to feel that things are getting better.

Unless the client comes from the interview with these two results, the time may not have been well spent. As the interview closes, the counselor should "audit" the interview with the client to determine whether or not progress has been made.

### Stages in the Interviewing Process

Although each interview will differ in problems considered, in techniques used, and in results, there are some

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stages that will characterize the interview. Because each of these stages will be considered in detail in later chapters, they will be mentioned here only to indicate the process as a whole. These stages will not always occur in this order nor will all of them appear in every interview.

1. Preparation for the interview. Both the interviewer and the interviewee will need to "get ready."
2. Rapport is built. The interviewer smoothly and cordially works with the counselee to establish such relationships as will help to make the interview most helpful.
3. The interviewee is helped to secure "tension release." He is encouraged to talk and to voice his feelings.
4. The interviewer and the counselee begin a survey of many aspects of the interviewee's background in an attempt to help the interviewee canvass all possible factors that may be involved.
5. The interviewee is helped to learn more about himself. Test results and other data will be studied.
6. The problems are identified and discussed as the interviewee develops his ability to identify and analyze these problems. The "problems behind the problems" become clearer and assume their rightful importance.
7. Possible courses of action are devised. The interviewee is encouraged to devise as many of these suggestions as possible.
8. The interviewee is helped to select possible courses of action and attention is given to methods of implementing these plans. The interviewee makes the final decisions.
9. Other resources and referrals are used.



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10. The interviewer follows through to help the individual carry out his course of action.
11. A record is made of the interview and its results.
12. The interviewer indicates his willingness to stand by or to be of further help if the course of action proves unsatisfactory.

## Some Considerations for Counselors

In addition to the suggestions that have already been presented, there are some additional factors to be taken into account. These items will tend to become part of the counselors' basic philosophy of interviewing. Some of these conditions are ethical considerations and cannot be tested, the presence of others has been experimentally verified, and still others remain hunches yet to be tested.

## Counseling Requires Skills

Effective counselee interviewing is a highly skilled professional service. This is borne out by observation and by the analysis of recorded interviews. There is no adequate substitute for training and experience in learning how to counsel with individuals. Just as a singer with an unusually rich, untrained voice needs coaching before he can perform acceptably in operatic roles, so also even a natural-born counselor can profit from coaching for his role.

## Counselee Motivation

The effectiveness of the counseling interview is increased by a desire and willingness on the part of the counselee to seek help in solving his problems. This point has been discussed in the preceding section. If motivation is assumed



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to be an important condition in human learning,<sup>2</sup> we may infer that a motivated counselee will profit more from his learning experiences in the counseling interview than one who does not feel impelled to do anything about solving his problems. Though some "incidental" learning may take place in a counselee who seeks an interview because of a sense of obligation to the person who sent him, or because he is compelled to do so against his will, it is unlikely either to direct or to sustain him in acting to solve his problems.

### Study Counselee's Environment

The effectiveness of the counseling interview is increased if the counselor can act upon knowledge of the psychological and social setting in which the counselee lives. It is no accident that counselor training programs have been broadened to include course work in such areas as economics, education, psychology, social work, sociology, and anthropology. Such a background, especially if supplemented by broad experience in meeting and dealing with people, enables a counselor to gain a richer appreciation of the beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and capabilities of the many different kinds of counselees with whom he works. Counseling does not take place in a vacuum; it functions in a world of complex interpersonal relations and of social change. Breadth of training and experience helps to insure greater flexibility and sensitivity in dealing with a variety of individuals and problem situations.

### Counseling Complexity

The effectiveness of the counseling interview is increased

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<sup>2</sup> J. A. McGeogh, *The Psychology of Human Learning*. New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1942, p. 514.

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if the counselor can act upon knowledge that a counselee's problems are likely to be complex in their interrelationships and in their origins. Human beings are the products of innumerable, complexly interwoven biological and social forces. This knowledge alone should cause the counselor to regard the counselee with simple and clear-cut problems as the exception rather than the rule—a condition verified by numerous investigations involving known classifications of counseling problems.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the counselor can expect that any one counselee's problem will have a variety of causes. For this reason, counselor and counselee may have to explore widely in the counselee's past and in his present situation for clues to the problems that he manifests in the counseling interview. It has already been emphasized that this exploration will be most acceptable and meaningful to the counselee if it is a cooperative process, rather than counselor-controlled.

An important consideration is that the counselor must learn to accept with caution a counselee's verbalizations of his problems. "I can't study" exemplifies an initial counselee statement that may indicate either (a) unwillingness or inability to verbalize his underlying problems, or (b) lack of perception of what his problems really are. Diagnosis and treatment based upon a superficial perception by counselor and counselee of the latter's problems may leave his real difficulties unmet and unsolved.

### Mobilize Counselee Abilities

The counseling interview is made more effective by a relationship that permits the counselee to mobilize as much

<sup>3</sup> Harold B. Pepinsky, (*The Selection and Use of*) *Diagnostic Categories in Clinical Counseling*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1948, p. 140.



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as possible his own resources for solving his problems. There is considerable evidence to support the assertion that most individuals have within themselves startling capacities for making needed adjustments to their environments and for developing abilities to cope with future situations.<sup>4</sup> A democratic counseling interview relationship that enables the counselee to develop increased self-help and self-directiveness not only acts to preserve the integrity of the counselee in the present situation but provides a framework for dealing with future emergencies. There is reason to believe that this result is best achieved when the counseling relationship is warm and friendly, and when the counselor refrains from passing judgment upon the counselee or his actions.

### The Role of the Counselee

In recent years increasing attention has been given to procedures for individualizing our counseling activities. This trend has tended to outmode many of the past "assembly-line" procedures in testing, in information getting, and in interviewing itself. Increasingly, attention is being given to a central theme: How can we vary our procedure and our counseling tools to fit the needs of each counselee?

Another trend stresses the importance of helping the counselee to attain greater self-directiveness and a more satisfying organization of his activities. It becomes apparent that the total adjustment of the individual is of greater import than his particular problems. To help him in learning to deal more realistically and adequately with his environment is more important than merely to gather in-

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<sup>4</sup> N. J. Raskin, "The Development of Non-directive Therapy," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 12, 1948, pp. 92-110.

## SUGGESTIONS TO INTERVIEWERS

formation about him. More attention is being given to identifying and marshaling the counselee's abilities to solve his own problems. It is assumed that the counselee will then be able to do a better job of meeting future situations.

The importance of counselee (as well as counselor) emotions is being given greater emphasis in the interview process. Studies of the ways people behave have indicated that emotions play a large part in their behavior. Failure to "know" is often of less importance than failure to "feel" properly.

### The Role of the Counselor

We, as counselors, have begun to act upon the assumption that the welfare of the counselee is of paramount importance. The processes of the counseling interview must be directed toward this end. At all times we must be aware of the fact that we are dealing with human lives. We must see that each counselee assumes ultimately the responsibility for his own actions. We must direct our efforts at helping him to do a better job of helping himself. We must guard against exploiting the counselee to gratify our own selfish motives—the desire to compensate for our frustrations, the desire to experience through someone else our unrealized ambitions, and the desire for power—all of which might be expressed through the manipulation of another person's activities. Finally, we must learn in the counseling interview to guard against our own biases and misconceptions.

### Summary of Suggestions

Each interview should be planned but the counselor must change his plans and vary his techniques to fit each situation.



## SUGGESTIONS TO INTERVIEWERS

### *How To Do It*

1. Help the counselee feel at ease.

2. Win counselee's confidence.

3. Use a variety of approaches.

4. Try to make the interview helpful.

5. Keep interview going.

### *What To Do*

Begin in an interested and friendly way. Be natural and sincere. Take it easy. Discuss topics of mutual interest. Insure privacy. Follow counselee's lead in getting into the problem. Provide comfortable setting.

Show a sincere interest. Recognize and respect his attitudes and ideas. Stress his strengths. Increase his self-respect. Do not violate confidential materials of other counselees. Don't be hurried. Let him talk. Do not pry. Try to understand *his* point of view. Do not sermonize.

Approach may be direct or indirect. Determine receptivity of counselee, duration of problem, emotional factors involved; keep shifting gears into better techniques as you gain more insight. Follow the lead of the counselee in determining the directions to take.

Encourage counselee to express himself frankly and freely. Encourage an analysis of the *real* problems. Observe reactions, mannerisms, tensions to locate key spots. *Listen and observe.* Listen for the counselee's "theme song." Provide for emotional release. Stimulate self-examination and self-therapy. Try to help counselee identify, analyze, and suggest solutions for own problems. Help counselee carry responsibility for own problems. Don't take over. Try to make some progress.

Try to move into helpful action. Don't get too far afield. Stop and summarize. Emphasize decisions and plans made by counselee. Re-state counselee's ideas occasionally. Try to explore all desirable angles.

## SUGGESTIONS TO INTERVIEWERS

### *How To Do It*

6. Guard against yourself.

7. Close the interview carefully.

8. Follow-up.

### *What To Do*

Don't take over the responsibility for the problem. Watch your own biases, attitudes, values. Be sure you are talking a language both understand. Don't push, coerce, or decide.

Plan some next steps. Don't drag on too long. Use other resources as referral aids. Make it possible for person to return. Observe counselee to determine time to stop. Stress plans involving action.

Follow-up to evaluate effectiveness of interviewing, to determine whether or not counselee needs additional help, to contact referral possibilities, and to check on your information.



# 4

## Getting Under Way

THERE ARE several ways the interviewer can help to get the interview off to a flying start. In using any of these methods, the interviewer carries a heavy responsibility for the success of the first stages of the interview.

### The Place Is Important

Proper physical and psychological conditions are very important. Few counselors have perfect offices in which to work, but nearly all counselors can greatly improve the setting for their interviews.

1. A special room rather than a classroom gives significance to the interview and removes it, psychologically, from the counselee's impressions regarding classroom activities.
2. The setting should be private and quiet. Successful interviewing cannot be done in the midst of a group of people.
3. The setting should be friendly and comfortable. Comfortable chairs, drapes, rugs, and special lamps will help.

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4. It should be located in a convenient but not too conspicuous part of the building.
5. The necessary files, testing rooms, occupational files, and other accessories should be easily available.

### Comfort and Warmth

Since good rapport and relaxation are desired outcomes of the interview, it is essential that the interview be held under friendly conditions.

1. The client should not have to face bright lights.
2. A choice of seating should be available. The client can then decide how he wants to sit in relationship to the counselor.
3. The counselor should eliminate any eye obstructions that prevent eye contact with the client.
4. The seating should be arranged so that "across the desk" interviewing need not be necessary unless desired by the counselee.
5. Ash trays (if smoking is permitted) will be of considerable assistance to some counselees.

### Psychological Setting

The "atmosphere" of the office is fully as important as the furniture. Here the counselor can do a great deal. Furniture of the right kind can give the room a home-like touch. Curios, knick-knacks, and other interesting paraphernalia can provide excellent conversational clues around which the interview might be started. A desk littered with disordered materials is not suggestive of a well-planned household. An air of abrupt, harsh tension can also negatively condition the client.



### Effective Reception Techniques

The success of the interview may be partially determined in the outer office. The client's experiences in the reception room do much to formulate and crystallize his reactions to the entire place. A friendly greeting overcomes the first feeling of timidity. Chairs and magazines in the outer office will be helpful to the client who arrives early. Avoidance of a lot of questioning or probing in the outer office helps to allay suspicions. The outer office provides the first introduction to the "atmosphere" of the office. Every effort should be made to see that the outer office helps to set the stage in the most desirable way.

### Privacy Is Essential

Privacy for interviewing is essential. A counselor operating in a noisy social center is definitely limited as to the kinds of help he can provide. Clients are not going to "unload" in front of a crowd.

During the interview itself interruptions should be kept to a minimum. Some arrangement with the outside offices should be set up so that phone calls or other interruptions will not be permitted. All counselors have had interviews that were reaching an effective climax when a long-winded phone call or an undesired intruder spoiled everything. Since these "spots" in the interview are hard to predict, a buzzer system or some other plan can be used to indicate to the outer office when phone calls or other interruptions should not be permitted.

### Pre-Planning

Many interviews provide an opportunity for some planning in advance. This activity will necessarily be condi-

tioned by the nature of the client. Is he known to the counselor? Has he been in before? Are his records available and is there information of consequence in the records? These and similar questions determine the kind of pre-planning that can be carried on.

### Get the Information

It will be helpful to know the client's name. If other information is available in his record, the counselor may advisedly spend a few minutes scanning it to get a quick picture of as much information as possible. It will be helpful to:

1. Locate some good conversational "openers."
2. Obtain an over-all picture of the client's experiences up to the present time.
3. Identify major interests, abilities, and characteristics.
4. Find some of the problems or difficulties as revealed by the material in the records.
5. Determine those contradictions or conflicts in the information which need further investigation.
6. Locate some of the possible discussional areas that might be covered in the interview.

### Getting Started

The setting has been arranged and the interviewer has taken a few minutes to get ready. The counselor will now test his skills as the counselee enters the room.

### A Created Relationship

The client is entering what is often a new place and is about to meet a new personality. He brings some difficulties with him. He is hopeful that the interviewer can assist



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him to care for some of these problems. Both participants face certain tests as they start to work.

1. Is the counselor genuinely interested in helping the counselee?
2. Has the counselee reached a state of readiness to respond to therapy?
3. Are both of them conscious of their varying backgrounds and experiences? Are they willing and able to find some common meeting ground?

The two participants in an interview are faced with a dynamic, moving relationship that is not solidified and is always in process. The expressed feelings, the responses, and the absence of responses produces a never-ending chain of influence. This process might be likened to a continuous series of unknown chemical reactions. It is not the original state of feelings, attitudes, or responses, but rather a new and altered group that the two parties are expressing. The recognition of this interplay presents a problem to the interviewer. How far can he free himself from his personality and still be of benefit to the interview? A guidepost might be determined by the extent to which he can profit in the mutual growth of the relationship. The learning cannot be a one-sided affair, for in this reflection of attitudes the new product of this integration is the child of mutually responsible parents. The challenge then is to be cognizant of this social phenomenon and yet to maintain a constant developing relationship that intelligently progresses to the solution of the problem.

### Avoid Hocus Pocus

Some authorities have left us with an impression that there is some strange, mystic characterization found in an

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interviewer. Students of interviewing labor through periods of training wondering just when the revelation is going to come about. Following their training they move through year after year of practical work still unconsciously hoping for "this thing" to happen. After years of effort, they begin to see and hear of the fruits of their efforts and so they resign themselves to the fact that even though they may lack the extreme touch, they are at least doing an acceptable job. Good interviewing is built on sound educational and psychological principles—the mystic is probably the shyster.

It would seem, then, that the prospective interviewer must face reality and recognize that interviewing is a process. The process is not something that can be measured as an end product but rather something to be judged by what is constructed. The degree of success in the interview is likely to be in proportion to the interviewer's willingness to accept and practice ever-improving methods. He must recognize that these methods may always need improvement and practice and that he will never reach a point of maximum accomplishment. He might then ask himself "Am I willing to accept a job in which I must always be striving for proficiency?" If the answer is in the affirmative, another major challenge has been answered.

### Establishing the Relationship

The interviewee steps through the doorway of the counselor's office and an interview is about to begin. The interviewer has tried (to the extent of his ability) to establish an effective setting. He has accepted the challenges of the interview and is willing to do his best. The acid test is now at hand and the two parties must be prepared to meet this test. If much is to be accomplished, a clarification of objectives must be made or the interview may lapse



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into a period of pointless conversation. In the absence of a clear picture of their relationships, the counselor may find the problem is not identified and steps for remedial action are not ascertained. As a means of furthering the determination of these objectives, the interviewer should consider the following general factors:

1. The individual approaching through the doorway is a new person, with a new problem or problems, and with a new emotional pattern. He probably considers his problem the most important problem needing immediate solution.
2. Every incident of the interview, from the entrance of the client to his exit, may serve as a vital key to guide the over-all counseling process.
3. The client must have an opportunity to release emotional tension, for such tensions serve as a block to the successful solution of the problem.
4. The client must obtain a clearer understanding of himself, his problem, and its solution if maximum client growth is to be expected.
5. The attitudes found in the new client may be at divergent ends with the attitudes of the counselor. The interviewer must be prepared to accept the likes and dislikes of the client. The likes and dislikes of the interviewer have no bearing at this time on the problem or its solution, and only tend to stymie the free expression of the client.

The client should have a clear understanding of the general limits of the relationship so that he, too, can be expected to add to the objectivity of the interview. The

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following limits are the ones most commonly established, without consideration as to order of preference.

1. The interviewer is willing to help with the solution to the problem but the analysis and planning is a joint responsibility.
2. The final decisions must be made by the client.
3. The interviews will be terminated within a given time and will occur at a mutually agreeable frequency.

Just how and when the client is to be told of the limits affecting the interview must be ascertained by the interviewer. A number of agencies have found it desirable to inform the client prior to his entrance into the first counseling situation. This may be accomplished by a form letter, by general orientation of a group, or by having a receptionist explain the relationship. Other agencies ask the counselor to insure this understanding early in the interview. Quite often the interviewer will find it to his advantage to have this responsibility removed from his agenda.

### Getting Acquainted

The technical term "rapport" implies, according to many writers, some strange level of understanding between the counselor and the counselee. It is a gross error to leave it at this level. It should be thought of as a term used to express a natural, normal, and appreciative understanding of one another in the interview situation.

When any two people meet for the first time, they formulate certain opinions of one another that are altered or substantiated in later contacts. If, in the initial meeting, adverse opinions are formed by the counselee, the counseling process is slowed down until a working relationship is



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established. It behooves the interviewer to take stock of himself at the beginning of each interview so that a minimum number of opinion obstacles will be present.

The interviewer may find the following ideas, to be used in the greeting, helpful in establishing rapport. These, of course, will be changed to fit varying circumstances.

1. Know and speak the client's name.
2. Stand and step forward to meet the client halfway.
3. Cultivate a natural-appearing expression of appreciation in meeting a new friend.
4. Shake hands with a firm, short handclasp.
5. Ask if he wishes to remove his coat and offer a place for its disposition.
6. Ask him to be seated before taking a seat yourself. Give him a choice of seating.
7. Make him feel at home.

All the above ideas lose their effectiveness if the interviewer gives an impression of artificiality. To be natural and sincere and to make the client welcome are goals of the greeting.

### The Opener

The interviewer can make the get-acquainted period much shorter if he is alert to potential topics of conversation and if he makes proper use of them. The interviewee may insist upon opening the problem and thus reduce the effectiveness or the need for an introductory discussion topic. In most cases, the interviewee tends to be nervous and hesitant in opening the problem subject, and it is for these cases that the interviewer must be prepared.

The selection of the topic should be one that would not

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embarrass the client and would still fit the occasion. The counselor may find one of the following suggestions helpful in his search for a topic.

1. *A factor brought about in the introduction.* If the client should open, for example, with "Al Smith of Norwalk suggested that I see you," the interviewer has two definite leads that he may utilize, "Al Smith" and "Norwalk." A word of caution should be noted in the acceptance of one or both of these leads. If there is any danger that the development of either will create an emotional block in the interviewee, it would be better to look for another tip.

2. *A factor gleaned from the record.* If a record or questionnaire pertaining to the interviewee's background is available, a fact such as a hobby may serve as a topic. If the interviewee is confronted with such a fact before he has an opportunity to learn that the counselor has such information, it may serve as an obstacle in the relationship. Unless the presence of such records is mutually recognized prior to or during the original contact, it may be helpful to use the fact indirectly. If, for example, the hobby is golf, the counselor might say, "I haven't had an opportunity to get out today, but from all reports this should be a great evening for the boys on the links." Although this statement can be answered by yes or no, the client has an opportunity to respond to something that is of vital interest to him and to a person that evidently has some of the same interests. He also has been given an opportunity to be of help to the counselor if he can shed any light on the probable golfing conditions. If the client fails to respond, the statement stands on its own merit. Thus the danger of an embarrassing question is eliminated.

3. *A fact of current social interest.* If the headlines of



the paper have acclaimed a recent nonstop flight from Australia to New York, this might be a natural topic. A topic, however, which is in a state of controversy is one to be considered carefully before using it in the get-acquainted period. The interviewer may find in the analysis of the interview justification for the introduction of controversial topics; he should remember, however, that such discussion items as religion, labor, and politics may set the entire interview process back both in time and solution. The opening of such topics may spark an outburst from the interviewee or cause him to become defensive. It tends to align the interviewer on one side of the issue and thus to prevent an impartial approach to analysis. The alert interviewer will probably find it to his advantage, then, to select a topic of general acceptance, even though this topic will probably slip into oblivion in the very near future.

### Establishing Confidence

Cooperative analysis and planning are contingent upon a mutual feeling of confidence. The interviewer is chiefly responsible for the development of confidence in the interview. He can condition himself to a point where the confidence tends to be automatic insofar as his feelings toward the client are concerned, but the problem is to develop the confidence of the client.

The client presents a very intricate network of emotions, which he usually tends to conceal from the counselor. To analyze these is difficult, questionable, and very time-consuming. It would seem, then, that the counselor might spend his efforts to a greater advantage in setting up an atmosphere in which the client gradually drops his defense and more readily accepts the interviewer.

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The recognition of the adverse experiences that the interviewee has suffered may be a help in the establishment of a feeling of confidence. In this day of more counseling, the imprint of other counseling experiences may be an obstacle that the client must remove from his thinking before he will be willing to enter the interview free of restraint. The client may have heard various reports of what happens in an interview and decided to parry until he has had a chance to evaluate the real conditions. There would seem to be very little that the interviewer can do to remedy this situation. He will do well to accept these factors as potential influences that will give him a better appreciation of timidity or hesitancy on the part of the interviewee.

### Few Short Cuts

The tendency of human beings to want to help others often causes the interviewer to wax eloquent. This occurs most often before the counselor realizes what is happening. He tends to lecture or to cross-examine the client in his desire to set up the perfect situation. The client, in turn, tends to shy away and becomes suspicious of the counselor. The interviewer must condition himself against this tendency to hurry, which results in a counselor-dominated lecture interspersed with rapid, pointed questions. This practice is necessary not only to establish confidence in the client but to maintain it as well.

### Counselor May Not Know

Another common human tendency that rears its ugly head to hamper the progress of the interview is the fallacious theory that the counselor should know all of the answers.



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Early in our lives we have learned to detect bluffers. We also learn to mistrust and question the integrity of such individuals. The counselor would do well to say "I don't know but maybe we can find the answer" rather than to bluff away the counselee's respect of him. Through joint effort both parties may obtain the correct information and the interview moves on a sound relationship.

### Give Undivided Attention

The counselee comes in with a problem and he wants help. If he has any reason to feel that the counselor lacks interest, the client tends to question the possibility of help. A sound rule for the counselor is to devote his undivided attention to the client. The simple effort of facing the client and being alert to his questions, changes in tone and facial expression, and topic trends helps him get over the obstacle of mistrust. All too often we hear of an interviewer who has interrupted the interview to look for his pipe, answer the phone, open letters, talk to himself, or otherwise violate the basic rules of etiquette. There is no way of measuring the degree of confidence lost or the amount of effort needed to repair the damage caused by such interruptions. The constant practice of directing all interest toward the client and his problem tends to expedite the growth of confidence.

### Don't Gossip

The question often arises whether counselors should or should not discuss cases, past or present. It would seem trite to say that human beings do not trust the "gossip" with any matter of a private personal nature. By the same token the interviewee soon learns of this tendency in the

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interviewer. This information may come about through the interview from such a statement by the interviewer as "John Doe has a funny problem," or it may be that the interviewer has established this reputation. The best rule for the interviewer, it would seem, would be to retain the content of the interview to the confines of his mind and files; if he does so, his effectiveness will increase many times.

Many more common-sense precautions might be noted for the potentially successful interviewer. The interviewer should approach the entire matter objectively, and make every attempt to reduce the major obstacles in the path of the successful interview. The lack of confidence in the interview, as in any other factor of human relations, is a leak in the dike of progress. The sooner the interviewer accepts the common factors of establishing confidence, the sooner the client's problem will reach an acceptable solution.

### Introducing the Immediate Problem

It is often difficult to move from general conversation to a consideration of the client's specific problems. The following suggestions may be helpful during this awkward transitional period.

#### When

In this age of what, when, where, why, and how, it seems only natural that an attempt be made to define more specifically the exact time to introduce the problem in the interview. At the outset it would seem logical to assume that since we recognize differences in people, problems, and solutions, we would therefore expect differences at this point of the interview. In spite of wide divergence, there are some ideas on the proper time to begin to analyze basic



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problems which will apply to most interviews. The following situations illustrate a few of these.

1. *Interviewee's impulsiveness.* Example: The client walks into the office and says "I can't get along with Jones and I want to quit!" The topic has been opened and it would seem foolish to waste time with a preliminary topic. The client has a problem and he wants to tell his story. To interrupt him might create a block that would impede all progress. Another factor seems quite evident in this type of introduction to the topic; he must have had confidence in the interviewer or the interviewing service to feel free to talk from the start. The fact that his statement indicates an emotional state would be another reason to allow him complete freedom to release his tension prior to a more objective analysis of the problem.

2. *A natural lead from the "opener."* Example: The interviewee, a varsity football player, has been discussing last season's record. This leads into next season and its prospects. The interviewer might then turn the conversation to the client's prospects during the coming season.

3. *A psychological pause at end of topic.* Example: The opener topic is about an amusing incident that had occurred in the interviewer's office. When the interviewer reaches the "punch line" or climax, both laugh and apparently a new topic is needed. If the interviewer feels that a working relationship is now possible, he might say "What can I do for you today, Joe?" A word of caution seems appropriate at this point. The tone, facial expression, and timing must be recognized by the interviewer, or what appeared as a healthy relationship may be lost. He must move easily, quietly, and naturally into the problem to maintain the best relationship.

## How

What has been said about divergence of cases in *when* to open the problem applies also in *how* to open the problem. It cannot be stressed too much, however, that one criterion holds precedence over everything else. The one thing upon which all other methods are contingent is the naturalness of the approach. The interview that slides gently, naturally, and easily from the topic opener to the problem is apt to move without friction toward its ultimate goal.

The following four methods apply to a large percentage of the cases of interviewing:

1. A direct statement by the interviewee. The client walks into the office and without hesitation states the immediate problem.
2. A direct statement by the interviewer. "What did you wish to see me about?"
3. A leading statement. "No doubt there is a problem on your mind."
4. A natural lead from the opener topic. The client opens his problem in the course of the opener discussion with some such statement as "I don't expect this golf season to be much fun, since I'm not going to be able to afford golf." This statement may be the lead necessary to move into the problem. The interviewer must exercise care at this point by using a statement summary (*i.e.*, "you can't afford golf this summer") in preference to a direct question. This will permit the client to develop the topic, if it is the one uppermost in his mind. A question might serve as a means of embarrassment or



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it may lead to one of the minor problems involved, thus causing delay in the interview process.

It should be noted at this point that the term *problem* used above refers to the immediate problem, which is the one originally declared by the interviewee. This may or may not be the real problem, but only after careful analysis can the real problem be determined. To try to detect the real problem early in the interview is quite dangerous, for the total picture has not yet evolved. Only by accepting the problem as stated and working with the counselee from that point can the counselor bring the true problem to light.

### The Roles To Be Played

The stage now seems to be set for the actual approach to the solution of the problem. The client has come into a desirable atmosphere and little has been placed in his way to impede the solution to his problem. He now becomes one of the two actors on the stage. If the actors are to participate intelligently and constructively, the roles they are to play must be ascertained.

### Role of the Interviewee

The interviewee should be expected to place on the "analysis table" a picture of the situation as he sees it. He should be held responsible for the following raw materials of the interview and encouraged at every turn to offer a complete personal picture.

1. The problem faced by the interviewee, its cause, and the probable results.
2. The number and kinds of attempts made to solve the problem.

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3. The apparent difficulties of the counselee to solve the problem as he sees it.
4. All related factors pertaining to the problem that have been identified by the counselee.

The amount and degree of the client's contribution rests upon a number of factors. The very fact that he is emotionally disturbed about the problem is usually conducive to a fair contribution to the above responsibilities, provided the client is given an opportunity to talk freely. During this period of the interview the interviewee should have complete freedom to express himself. The interviewer may find it necessary to ask a question now and then to insure the complete coverage of the counselee's responsibilities. Such statements as "Then all attempts to solve the problem have been unsuccessful?" or "These are the only factors behind your problem?" may serve as a means of a more complete client description.

### Role of the Interviewer

It will be much easier for the interviewee to present his story if the interviewer will set up some guideposts for himself. The following suggestions for the interviewer may serve to help the unfolding of client's interpretation of the data.

1. Don't interrupt the story.
2. Don't reflect personal agreement or disagreement.
3. Don't ridicule or humiliate the counselee.
4. Avoid sympathy—encourage empathy.
5. Be shockproof to surprise.
6. Don't jump to early conclusions and thereby condition later interpretations.



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In addition to insuring the counselee's explanation, the counselor has additional obligations during this phase of the interview. The following responsibilities are some of the more pertinent ones:

1. The interviewer must start to accumulate hunches for later confirmation or rejection.
2. Possible leads or suggestions can be "nailed down" by having the counselee reaffirm or repeat a statement or point of view.
3. Every fact presented should be accepted at its face value. This tends to prevent counselor opinion from altering the picture.
4. The interviewer must be ever on the alert to see what possible causes for the problem might be inherent, but not yet verbalized.
5. Periodic summaries should be made.
6. The interviewer must constantly check his thinking on himself to prevent *symptoms* from becoming *causes*.

In addition to the above factors the counselor must keep in mind that the counselee himself may not be aware of the real drives that are motivating him. If such be the case, then the next steps can very well be ineffective if based on the stated facts. The mental cognizance of the probable motivating factors tends to keep the counselor on a more objective plane as he accepts the client's analysis. Some of these drives may be:

1. Pressure from family or public opinion.
2. Previous experiences that were unpleasant or unusually pleasant.

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3. Fear of the unknown.
4. Dissatisfactions in personal life.
5. Need for security.
6. Need for power.

### Balancing Responsibility

The major physical and psychological blocks to client participation have been removed. The roles of the two participants have been defined. The problem has been introduced and the situation, as the interviewee sees it, is being unfolded. The interviewer says to himself "Now, what do I do?"

Since so much emphasis has been placed on developing a feeling of belonging on the part of the interviewee, there must be justification for its continuance. There certainly is no disagreement that some possible solutions to the problem are the major outcomes to be sought during the interview. Likewise, there seems to be little debate that if the solution to the problem is to be meaningful to the client, he must accept the final outcomes of the interview. Individuals in all walks of life take pride in articles of their own creation and have greater confidence to act on their own conclusions than on those of another. Therefore, the need for client participation becomes evident.

Much has been written about the value of the integration of ideas in order to improve the quality of the end product. It might be thought of as the old saying, "Two heads are better than one." The implication of this hypothesis of interviewing seems quite apparent. If a more valid solution is to be reached in problem solving, both participants must contribute.



### Make Haste Slowly

Quite often the time allocation given to a specific problem makes it imperative to reach a solution in a very short time. The reader will note the conflict of two opposing forces at this point: the need to reach a solution at an early date and the need for client participation. If the interviewer does the analyzing and gives the answers, the interview could be terminated in the shortest possible time. This, however, would be a waste of time in most cases, for the interviewee has neither reached a realization of the problem nor a willingness to accept the analysis or the solution. Such a solution is likely to be a poor one. The interviewee should be permitted to work out an analysis and to make most of the plans.

An analysis of what has been said indicates the following:

1. If the solution to a problem in the interview is to be of any real help, the interviewee must actively participate in the solving process.
2. If the solution is to have maximum validity, the integration of the thinking of two minds is desirable.
3. If the problem is to be moved to an early valid solution, two cooperating minds tend to make possible more rapid progress.

The conclusion, then, is that through shared responsibility in analyzing the problem and in planning the next steps, the interviewer and the interviewee will make the maximum amount of progress.

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### Summary of Suggestions <sup>1</sup>

1. Gather some information in advance and study the data before the interview.
2. Use a warming up period to get acquainted.
3. Study counselee to determine your starting techniques.
4. Follow counselee's lead before moving from the general into the specific, from the obvious to the less apparent.
5. Use an exploratory period to learn a little about all aspects of the counselee and to locate general areas of possible importance.
6. Try to locate some achievements, strengths, prides, or drives of counselee to use if necessary.
7. Show a direct *interest* in the counselee.
8. Accept his statements and attitudes as *facts* (as a starting relationship).
9. Don't argue, try to persuade, coerce.
10. Don't gossip about others or show any tendency to reveal confidences.
11. Use "conversational hooks"—end with a question or pick up something he has already said.
12. Answer his questions in a frank, straightforward way.
13. Avoid a patronizing or sympathetic manner. Don't cry on his shoulder.
14. Encourage comments by counselee but *do not probe*.
15. Don't reveal your attitudes or you will condition the rest of the interview. Don't imply, suggest or indicate your reactions.

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<sup>1</sup>C. E. Erickson, *A Practical Handbook for School Counselors*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, Inc., 1949, p. 55.



## GETTING UNDER WAY

16. Begin with the most important thing on his mind.  
How did it begin? When did he first notice it?
17. A discussion of a test result is often a good place to start an interview.
18. Be sure the counselee has a chance to release his tensions.
19. Encourage counselee to carry his own responsibility for his problems.
20. Permit him to tell his own story in his own way.  
Don't interrupt.
21. The interviewer should be considered as a conversational equal.
22. The interviewer makes clear the client's responsibility for planning and action.

# 5

## The Interview Itself

AFTER THE INTERVIEW gets started, there is no way to predict the turn of events. The two participants will need to be alert to each new development. They will have to give intelligent direction to each phase. The ground that has been covered and the emerging objectives will provide some help in determining the directions to be followed.

### Techniques During the Interview

It is dangerous to list definite things to do and things to avoid in practicing almost any skill. This is particularly true in interviewing, since there is little research to validate the suggestions. But such lists are necessary evils at times, and may even be of some assistance as guideposts or rules, if they are not too rigidly followed. The suggestions<sup>1</sup> that follow are not to be considered a set of rules for interviewing; they merely attempt to summarize suggestions that interviewers may study in order to improve their own techniques.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Interview in Counseling, Retraining and Reemployment Administration*, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C., pp. 17-25.



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1. *Opening the Interview.* If both parties in the interview are as nervous as we have indicated earlier, it is important that they both arrive quickly at a more relaxed state. A few of the ordinary rules of good manners, like greeting the client by name and asking him to sit down, come quickly to mind. Then a relatively neutral and casual statement, such as "What do you have on your mind today?" or "What do you want to see us about?" or "What can we help you with?" may open up the interview for the client.

2. *Phrasing Questions.* One of the best ways to cut off any conversational flow from the client is to ask a question that can be answered "Yes" or "No." For example, the question "So you want to start a small business?" is far less productive than the question "How did you happen to think of starting your own business?"; and this in turn may not be quite as effective as the simple statement "Tell me what you have in mind when you talk about starting a small business." Questions that can be answered by "Yes" or "No" or some similar terminal statement should be avoided wherever possible.

3. *The Client's Experiences with Counseling.* Today, with the general enthusiasm about counseling, many clients coming to an Advisory Center will have been "counseled" before, either at a military separation center or at one of many possible governmental agencies. The feeling of your client about you as a counselor will not always be a happy one, especially if he has had a bad time earlier. He will be comparing you with other counselors he has known, good or bad. He will be quoting to you his interpretations of what other counselors have told him. It will often be quite necessary to ask him what others have told him so that you will not be working at cross purposes. On the other hand, it is worth remembering that he will interpret what other people have told him primarily in terms of his own subjective feeling and attitudes and wants, not with any high degree of objectivity.

4. *Overtalking the Client.* Many people in an interview may find it difficult to state what they mean concisely, and without some fumbling for words. Don't be in such a hurry that

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you override or overtalk the client if he is fumbling for the phrases he wants. A very frequent error of beginning interviewers is to put words in a client's mouth or talk faster than the client, or in some way take the conversation away from the client.

5. *Accepting the Client's Attitudes and Feelings.* At various points in the interview the client may be trying to express the more deep-seated attitudes and feelings that control his behavior. He will bog down in the task simply because none of us finds it easy to put into words some of our more private attitudes, resentments, doubts, and uncertainties. He may also fear that the interviewer won't approve of what he says. The interviewer must indicate to the client that he has accepted but not passed judgment on these feelings and attitudes. Merely saying "I see," or "I understand," or "Yes," will serve to bridge the conversational gap and to keep the client talking.

6. *Cross Examining.* Do not fire questions at the client like a machine gun. The interview is not a cross-examination. If you are filling out an interview blank and have to get names, addresses, and other items of fact, spread these items throughout the interview, don't pile them up in a series of questions at the beginning. In any event, when questions are needed, space them out and phrase them in as neutral a manner as possible.

7. *Silences in the Interview.* Most people are embarrassed if no conversation is going on. Silences seem long and endless. If such silences were actually timed with a stop watch, they would probably be found to last not more than thirty seconds and they do not represent necessarily a real absence of activity. The client may be groping for words or ideas; the interviewer may be studying an earlier bit of conversation that has already taken place. Do not, therefore, be frightened by the silences that sometimes fall in interviews. Do not fill them up with a lot of chattering that breaks the trend of thought or interrupts the flow of feeling. If it becomes necessary to break a silence, merely ask the client to tell you a little bit more about the point he has just finished covering. This will give him a chance to get in motion again.



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8. *Reflecting the Client's Feeling.* If the client is attempting to put a deeply emotional attitude into words, it may be a difficult and awkward process. He may have a feeling of shame or guilt attached to this attitude, or he may hesitate to appear ridiculous in the eyes of another human being. Whatever his motivations, this flow of emotion will be cut off beyond recovery if the interviewer passes moral judgment on the attitude or turns aside from the underlying feeling that is emerging. The interviewer will have turned aside from the underlying feeling if he asks a question that moves the interview off in another direction.

It is better to say "You feel that people are being unfair to you," than to tell the complainer "Everybody has trouble getting along some time." It is better to say "You would like to get married now but you are not sure that you are still in love with this girl since you have not seen her in so long," than to say "Go ahead and get married now," or "Wait awhile until you feel better acquainted." It is better to say "You feel that the interviewer whom you asked about jobs did not do you any good," than to say "I am sorry, but you must go back to see the interviewer again since he is the one who must help you." Reflecting feelings and attitudes means that you hold up a mirror, so to speak, in which the client can see the meaning and significance of his deep-seated feelings.

9. *Admitting Your Ignorance.* If the client asks a question regarding facts and you don't have the facts, it is better to say "I don't know" than to run off with a lot of vague generalities or in some other way try to cover up your ignorance. The client is likely to have more confidence in the interviewer who does not hesitate to admit his ignorance. It would be desirable for the counselor to get these facts later, and to tell the client where to get them.

10. *Distribution of Talking Time.* Probably the greatest mistake of beginning interviewers is their tendency to talk the client into a coma. There are no hard or fast rules regarding the percentage of time that each of the actors in our play should talk. Within the interview itself there are certain places where the interviewer must do most of the talking; but if the interview

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is to have a successful effect on the client, there are certain points where he must do most of the talking: in developing understanding of himself; in bringing his attitudes to the surface; and in formulating plans of action. Generally speaking, if the interviewer talks considerably more than one-half the time, that interview will be less productive than the one in which the client talks more than one-half the time.

11. *The Vocabulary of the Interviewer.* We have said earlier that if the ideas and words are beyond the range of the client, he won't learn much. This means that the interviewer must make some judgment of the level of verbal ability and understanding of the person to whom he is talking. He must then choose his words accordingly, striving always to keep the words as simple as possible and to keep the ideas as clear as possible, repeating and rephrasing when necessary.

12. *The Number of Ideas Per Interview.* It is unlikely that in the usual interview a major miracle can be wrought in the life style of another person. This means that the number of ideas and topics discussed might well be kept to a minimum in most interviews. If a man needs to be referred to four agencies in a community, he can be told all about those agencies and where they are and whom to see in forty minutes. However, the chances are that if he is told about two of the agencies in each of two twenty-minute interviews and then visits two of the agencies between the interviews, he will get more out of it than he will out of the first interview we have described. It may be suggested that a human being does not act like an automobile, all of whose needs can be met in a one-stop filling station. Just as there is a danger of giving the individual a run-around, there is an equal danger in a one-stop system that loads him up with so many ideas that he will forget most of them. Furthermore, the counselor must have time to sort out the ideas which seem relevant to the client's needs.

This same problem of the number of ideas per interview is particularly important where the ideas involved deal with emotional attitudes, resentments, failures, frustrations, and conflicts. It will do very little good if the interviewer gets the client to



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"tell all" that is on his mind. If by over-sympathetic attention or excessive curiosity the interviewer tricks the client into saying too much about his feelings, the client will go out with a very little likelihood of coming back again, since he will feel guilty and ashamed at having exposed so much to a stranger.

13. *Control of the Interview.* If the interview is to have the continuity and the end results that will lead to a modification of the client's behavior, the interviewer must keep control of the interview. He may have to pull the client back from conversational byways, from fruitless arguments, or from temporarily insoluble problems. This can be done without interrupting the free flow of the client's attitudes as mentioned in Point 8 above. Expressions like "We were talking about —," or "What was it you said about —?" or "How does this fit into what you said earlier?" will serve to bring the conversation back to its normal course.

14. *Avoid the Personal Pronoun.* Most of us are inclined to use the word "I" much more than we realize. "I think you should go to see Mr. Blank," "If I were you I would do —," "It seems to me that," "I don't see how you can." Generally speaking, the interview will be more effective and will result in a freer conversation if the interviewer will rephrase the above questions or remarks to eliminate the use of "I" or "me" or similar references to himself. The client is not asking the interviewer for his opinion or his experiences. The client is really formulating his own opinions in a way that will permit him to criticize himself.

15. *Bad News in the Interview.* Not all the facts that the interviewer must give to the client are happy or favorable. It does no good in such situations to reassure the individual by saying that "everything will turn out all right," or "I am sure you won't have any trouble in doing this." If the job situation in the community is tough, nothing is gained by kidding the client about it. If the client wants to do something that cannot be done in this particular agency, no good is accomplished by agreeing to perform the miracle. If you over-sell the client on the agency to which you are going to send him, he is in for a

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disappointment which could have been avoided by pointing out the difficulties under which that other agency works. If housing is bad, the client will eventually learn so anyhow.

16. *Additional Problems.* It is not the job of the interviewer to make "problem children" out of his clients. On the other hand, the interviewer must not be misled by assuming that the client's own first statement of his difficulty is either true or complete.

For example, the question may simply involve the place where a pension claim is to be filed. The answer is given and the client does not get up to leave the room. Apparently the interview is over, but the client is still there. It may well be that he has something else on his mind and it is the job of the interviewer to find out what further difficulties need to be discussed. "Was there something else you wanted to ask about?"; "Do you have something else on your mind?" These may produce the desired effect.

17. *The Frequent Visitor.* There is a particular group of people who love to discuss their "problems." They will return periodically for a good heart-to-heart talk with the interviewer. They will give every evidence of intending to do just what the interviewer tells them to do, but for some reason they never quite get around to going to the agencies where they are referred. While it is true that the willingness of the clients to return to the interviewer is one measure of the interviewer's success, it is also true for this group of people that the interviewer is wasting his time in repeated interviews with them. They are sympathy seekers, the complainers, the overly dependent people that clutter up the crowded time of a busy interviewer.

18. *Setting Limits on the Interview.* No matter how much an interviewer may be inclined toward lengthy sessions with each client, office routines do not permit them and successful interviewing does not demand them. It is better if the interviewer and the client realize from the beginning that the interview will last for a fixed length of time. It is the job of the interviewer to see that the interview stays approximately within



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that time. Other interviews may be scheduled later on if the client desires them.

19. *Plans for Action.* While it is not essential in all cases that the client rush out and do something as a result of the interview, it is generally true that he will complete the learning process about himself and about his particular world if there are certain things that he feels he has to do as a result of the interview discussion. Furthermore, much of our planning in life is based on our flexibility in modifying a course of action, or on building several plans to meet new adjustment problems. Thus it is of assistance for the interviewer and the client to work out alternative plans of action wherever possible. It is not enough for the client to decide to go to school, for instance. He should have some idea which school he is going to and what will happen if he can't go where he wants to go. If he cannot get into the day school of his choice, will the alternative of night school fill the bill? The working out of alternative plans is important in the over-all interviewing process.

20. *Summarizing the Interview.* The amount of learning that has gone on in the interview can be roughly estimated from the way in which the client summarizes the interview. When the interviewer sees the time is drawing to a close, it is his job to set the stage for the summary. If possible the client should do the summarizing. "Now suppose we see what we have accomplished in this interview," or "Tell me how you think the situation looks now"—phrases of this kind will be of assistance in calling forth a summary from the client.

21. *Ending the Interview.* This is not an easy task. In the general relaxation that follows the stress of interviewing, the interviewer may become expansive and start to babble about his own life and his own interests. The interview may degenerate into a most casual social conversation. This is likely to destroy much of the good work that has been done by breaking the quiet, rather objective, and apparently slow pace of the interview up until that moment. Quite often a phrase such as "Do you think we have done all we can for today?" or "Is there anything more you would like to talk about today?" will be enough to end the

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interview. It may help for the interviewer to stand and move toward the door. It is important in any event to learn your own technique of ending an interview when it is really over within the time limit you have set.

### THINGS A GOOD INTERVIEWER REMEMBERS

1. *The Importance of Case Notes.* The human memory is a most unreliable record-keeping device. This is particularly true in conducting a daily interview schedule. Therefore, it is essential that some provision be made for keeping case notes on the content and outcome of interviews. These will probably have to be kept in the interviewer's own handwriting, since secretarial help or dictating equipment may not be available. Generally speaking it is best to write your case notes *immediately after* the interview. Case notes during the interview may bother the client.

The Advisory Center may set up a printed record, with spaces for entering or checking the client's name, address, stated problems, and referrals used. Such a record will become the basis of summarizing volume of work performed each month or week. But it will not serve the purposes of the individual interviewer who needs to keep more detailed notes on each case. For this purpose, the interviewer should maintain his own file of case notes. These should include entries about: the attitudes and feelings expressed by the client; evidence as to his abilities, interests, and past achievements; summaries of the plans of action worked out in the interview; and outlines of what the interviewer tried to accomplish. There is no set pattern for the preparation of such notes; each interviewer will find the form that suits him best.

It is important that each interviewer strive to make his notes in comparable form from one case to another, so that he builds up habits of note writing and can find information under accustomed side headings or outline topics. If case notes are conscientiously kept, they are valuable in improving interview technique.

2. *The Confidential Nature of Interview Material.* It cannot



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be too strongly stressed that the materials accumulated in interviewing are confidential. They are not to be discussed over the lunch table or with one's friends. If the interviewer finds himself saying "I had the most interesting case today," it would be wise for him to consider the confidences he is violating in what he is about to say. This issue applies also to the use of case notes or records that are kept in Advisory Centers. If the interview reaches the counseling point, in that the individual is revealing things about himself that are essentially his own business, the interviewer had better maintain a separate file of case notes which will not be open for casual public inspection.

3. *Amount of Counseling Possible.* Since the process of arriving at a good adjustment is itself a long-time affair, counseling also can require many interviews before it becomes completely effective. These interviews will go more deeply into some problems and cover a greater range of problems if the relationship between the interviewer and client is good. But in the programs of the Advisory Centers it is likely that only a few cases will be handled on what might be defined as full counseling service. Most of the questions that will be raised by the client require very careful, but none the less straightforward, informational answers. The interviewer in the Advisory Center should not be upset by the fact that he does not have a feeling of giving full counseling service to the individuals he sees. The pressure of time; the administrative organization of the Center; the pressures of the client for some form of action; the emphasis on informational service in most of the requests for help—all these tend to make the amount of intensive counseling somewhat small. In one sense, this is not too serious, since the interviewer will be partly trained at best in many Advisory Centers. It is important for the interviewer not to try to do too much and not to worry unduly if something is left undone.

4. *Follow-up Work.* Adequately staffed and financed Advisory Centers can provide routine administrative follow-up as a basis of evaluating their interviewing practices. Some Centers cannot afford such. But with or without the help of others, each interviewer should himself carry on some informal follow-up

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work with his clients. If he discovers in this process that the clients are not going to the referral agencies to which he sends them, there may be something wrong with the technique he uses to make the referral. If a follow-up interview is used, the interviewer may discover things regarding the client that had escaped him before and may therefore be able to be more helpful. If the client voluntarily seeks additional interviews, this may be in part a measure of the interviewer's success in establishing a good relationship with the clients, unless the interviews become like those described in Paragraph 17 above.

Follow-up work can be accomplished by phoning the agencies to which you have referred the client. It may be accomplished by calling the client directly. Generally speaking, the client should be given the opportunity to schedule another appointment if he wants to do so, but the interviewer should not force such a second appointment on him as a basis of the follow-up work.

The follow-up can also be done by letter to the client or to the agency to which he was sent. Sometimes the client will return to indicate that he did not get what he wanted from the agency to which he was directed. In other situations he will reject the interviewer's referral to a particular agency because of an earlier bad experience with that agency. This puts the interviewer on a spot. He is supposed to cooperate with the recognized agency in his community, yet in the particular case at hand, for reasons not yet understood, the client and the recognized agency are not getting along. The client cannot be driven back, but by additional counseling, his attitude may be modified as outlined in Paragraphs 5, 8, and 19 above. But if these techniques fail to work and the problem still exists, the interviewer will have to try referral to another agency or collect the records and information himself.

### Analyzing Problems

The crucial part of the interview occurs when the client's difficulties are studied. If mistakes are made at this time,



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all future therapy is wasted. If symptoms rather than causes are accepted, the entire process of counseling will be futile. It is essential, therefore, that counselor and client move carefully when the interview begins its diagnosis.

### What Is Valid?

Before the participants in the interview can identify problems they need to appraise the soundness of their information. They should ask such questions as:

1. Can this information be verified, be reproduced?
2. Is the information available in adequate quantities to be relied upon?
3. Does somewhat similar information appear at chronologically different times?
4. Does the information come from several different sources?
5. Does the information gathered from records, from tests, from background-data blanks check with the results of the interview?
6. Does the information check with your judgment and the opinions of others?
7. Does the information agree with the client's performance in school, on the job?
8. Is the client in a situation where he can easily provide accurate information without embarrassment?
9. Does the client provide information freely, quickly, and without obvious tensions?
10. Has the information been gathered by techniques that are fair and understood by the client?
11. Are the tests that have been used applicable to the client and his situation?

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12. Does the client feel that the information represents a fair and accurate portrayal?

### Identifying Problems

The client's problems may be identified in a variety of ways. The alert counselor will use as many approaches as are useful and needed.

1. The client may voluntarily express his difficulties.
2. A problem inventory or checklist may be used to supplement the information gained through the interview.
3. Test results, the cumulative record, and the referral agency may all be helpful.
4. Autobiographical and anecdotal materials are often of great help.
5. Conflicts, omissions, overemphasis on some things, and developing tensions are all indicative of problem possibilities.

### Client Planning

A primary outcome of the interview is growth of the client's ability to care for his own problems. It would seem desirable, therefore, to encourage vigorous client participation in the process of identifying and studying problems. The counselor will use many devices to encourage client activity. Conversational "hooks" and open-ended questions will be frequently employed. The counselor will hesitate to infer or suggest unless he thinks that greater client stimulation will result. The final analysis should be, as much as possible, the product of the client.



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### Understanding Social Settings

There is an evident danger in attempting to understand the individual through the use of the interview. The interview is a "fish bowl" technique. The client is out of his normal habitat and away from his usual associates. As a result, he is going to behave differently. His actions and his verbalizations will not necessarily represent him with accuracy or with adequacy. The counselor faces the task (in cooperation with the client) of attempting to direct the interview toward the client's regular activities. The client and the counselor cannot analyze problems effectively unless their scrutiny includes a careful study of the client's "normal" behavior.

### Interpreting Information

The counselor needs to determine what information he should interpret to his client, when the interpretation should be made, and how to make it most effectively.

Although there are few clear-cut answers to these questions, the counselor may find the following suggestions of some value.

1. The interpretative process has to take place during the entire interview. Information should be provided when it fits and when the counselor is ready for it.
2. The information should be "spotlighted" according to the needs of the counselee and the nature of the evidence.
3. There should be a balance of strengths and weaknesses and a well-rounded portrayal of all important considerations.
4. Information should be interpreted in relationship to

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the situations the client has faced and will probably meet in the future.

5. General relationships will prove more helpful to the client than specific detailed numbers.
6. Information should be given to the client as he indicates a willingness and an ability to understand it.
7. General areas of information should be included rather than a vast amount of unorganized detail. Don't get lost in the forest.
8. The client should be encouraged to evaluate himself before he is given the material gathered by the interviewer.
9. Information should be qualified in terms of norms used, relative ratings, what items *do* and *do not* measure.
10. There should be cooperation with the client in discussing the *implications* of data being presented.
11. Data should be interpreted in terms of several possible courses of action.
12. Attaching of undue importance to a single score or point should be avoided.
13. Items should be interpreted in terms of probability and not with finality.
14. Test scores or past performance should not be interpreted as definite guides to the future. Client should be helped to understand the possibility of improvement of performance.

## Developing Plans

Almost all the earlier interview activities have been preparatory. They have been used to build a firm foundation upon which intelligent planning might be based. The



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following considerations are of importance in the development of plans:

1. The plans to be evolved must be somewhat in accordance with the client's aims and aspirations.
2. The client's *understanding* of his problems and his situations must guide planning.
3. The client's "feelings" as well as his thinking must be taken into account.
4. The plans developed must be acceptable to the client and be possessed by him.
5. The client should be encouraged to suggest as many of the plans as possible.
6. Immediate goals should be considered in relation to long-term possibilities.
7. The *intensity of desire* and *operational efficiency* of the client will condition the plans to be made.
8. The plans may very logically be developed in terms of alternatives.
9. The client's freedom of movement (freedom to make choices) determines somewhat the plans to be made.
10. The formulation of plans should sometimes be delayed until the client has had time for contemplation, further study, and additional experience.

### Closing the Interview

The closing stages of the interview must be competently handled. The interviewee will tend to remember more vividly the closing moments; as a result, the entire interview can be bungled at this point.

### Time Limitations

Practice and theory vary regarding the advisability of following specific time allotments. Each interview varies

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so much from the preceding one that adjustable time arrangements may work best. On the other hand, the establishment of a time arrangement tends to encourage both participants to use the time more wisely. The counselor is in the best position to determine his own policies. These policies will need to be developed in accordance with institutional policies, type of clientele, and adequacy of counseling time.

### When To Stop

If the interview has proceeded satisfactorily, there will be several indications to help decide when to stop. If the interviewee's situation has been explored, if time for emotional release has been adequately provided, if the client has developed some plausible plans of action, and if the client seems satisfied, the time for closing is probably approaching. An interview should not be allowed to drag. On the other hand, it should not be closed before its purposes have been accomplished.

### Client Satisfaction

The counselee should leave with a feeling of satisfaction. A feeling of dissatisfaction will not result in much constructive action. The interviewer may want to secure the reactions of his client regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the interview. This review will be helpful in evaluating the techniques used, in further exploration by the counselee, and in stressing the more important parts of the interview.

### Closing Summary

Both participants should review the interview. It is important that the essentials covered be searched for and



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emphasized. It will also be desirable to re-examine the entire meeting to be sure no important gaps are left. The counselee might be asked to review his plan of action.

In closing, the counselor should assure the counselee of his continued interest in his welfare. He should also indicate that the door is always open for a return engagement.

### After the Interview

When the interview is completed, the counselor has two important responsibilities left to discharge.

1. He should write a report of the interview as soon as possible. By making an immediate record he gets the information recorded before he has forgotten the essential points covered.
2. He should follow-up the interview. This may be done in a few days or a few weeks, depending upon the nature of the case. This follow-up provides a means of evaluating the effectiveness of his interviewing. It also determines whether or not the client is in need of additional help.

# 6

## Organizing the Counseling Program

SYSTEMATIC and effective interviewing cannot be carried on unless the school or agency develops adequate counseling services. The interview is only one phase of the process of counseling. It is pertinent, therefore, to consider first the over-all services of the guidance program and then the organization of the counseling activities.

### The Guidance Program

The guidance or pupil personnel program consists of a variety of specific services. Some of these services are directed by the counselor, while others are responsibilities shared with other staff members. The following areas cover the major services of the guidance program.

1. *Services to groups of pupils.* Pupils often have many needs and problems not cared for in the instructional program. In addition, there are several group activities that are needed to supplement and enrich the counseling program. Illustrations of these group services are: orientation activities, occupational information, group testing, guidance units in regular classes, group conferences, career days, and clubs. Most of these services can and should be carried



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on as important and integral parts of the regular instructional program.

2. *Services to individuals.* The guidance program is particularly interested in the improvement of services to the individual. Such activities would include help to pupils in: self-understanding, selecting courses and programs, making educational and vocational plans, initiating plans of action, solving personal problems, placement and follow-up, and learning problem-solving skills.

3. *Services to the staff.* The guidance program should be of distinct service to the rest of the staff. It should help teachers get information about pupils, assist in the in-service training program, serve teachers as a referral resource, assist teachers with problems they face, provide research information needed by teachers, furnish information to teachers about home and community factors, and actively assist in activities promoting teacher growth.

4. *Services to the administration.* The guidance program should be of real help to the administrators of the school. It may aid in curriculum reorganization and development, assist in evaluating the school's program, aid in sectioning and placement of pupils, help in furnishing research information, and provide information on problem cases.

5. *Services to parents and community organizations.* The guidance program should help to unite the school, the home, and the community. There are many ways by which the guidance program can be of assistance. It can encourage parents to participate when pupils' academic plans are being made. It can confer with parents and utilize their insights and assistance. It can identify community referral resources to help pupils and parents to use these resources in a more

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effective way. It can develop cooperative arrangements with employers and with placement services.

6. *Services in research.* Every school needs more adequate and accurate information upon which to build. The guidance program can furnish much of this needed information. It can conduct community occupational surveys, follow-up studies, failure studies, work experience needs, pupil problem surveys, studies of individual pupils, and surveys of pupils' interests and plans. These studies will be helpful to the counselors; they will be of even greater help to the entire staff. In carrying on the studies, the entire staff will be encouraged to participate.

### The Role of Staff Members in a Guidance Program

All members of the staff participate in some way in the complete program of guidance services. In some fields they have direct, assigned, and primary responsibility. These functions are rather clear-cut and the job to be done can be staked out. However, many of the school's responsibilities for youth are *shared* functions. Several staff members must work together if the job is to be well done. Many responsibilities of the guidance program fall within this cooperative or shared approach. As a result it is sometimes difficult to determine where one worker leaves off and another begins. Each school staff must develop its own set of working relationships.

### Role of Administrator

Administrative leadership is indispensable. Without it no program can succeed. It is important, therefore, that we understand the contributions the administrator should make.



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1. The administrator helps the staff concentrate its attention on the problems, needs, and characteristics of the pupils.
2. The administrator has the responsibility for providing personal leadership in developing better guidance services.
3. The administrator helps the staff understand the "shared responsibility" of all for pupil growth. He helps them understand their mutual concern and the changing proportions of responsibility in different situations.
4. The administrator helps to build attitudes and understandings that make it possible for counselors and teachers to work effectively because of their appreciation of each other's contributions.
5. The administrator provides the time, scheduling, and facilities to enable staff members to work more effectively.
6. The administrator helps to interpret the program of guidance services to the school board and to the community.
7. The administrator helps by providing in-service training activities to assist teachers and counselors in acquiring greater skills.
8. The administrator helps the staff organize its resources to provide optimum benefits to pupils.

### Role of the Teacher

No guidance or counseling program can neglect the classroom teacher. The number of teachers, the numerous contacts they have with pupils, the important bonds they build with the young people, and the influence they have

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with pupils makes their vigorous participation desirable and necessary. Teachers can make these all-important contributions:

1. Teachers, as teachers, are primarily concerned with the problems and needs of their pupils.
2. Teachers are the first line of detection of the emerging maladjustments of pupils.
3. Teachers control most of the school situations that contribute to pupil development.
4. Teachers have an opportunity to implement many of the decisions made as a result of the pupil's contacts with the counselors.
5. Teachers have an opportunity to provide many group-therapy activities.
6. Teachers have an opportunity to provide many instructional services closely related to the needs and problems of the pupils.
7. Teachers have an opportunity to acquire much information and many insights about pupils and their experiences.
8. Teachers develop many effective contacts with parents and community agencies. These contacts have important possibilities in the complete guidance program.
9. Teachers have many personal contacts with pupils. These "rapport" relationships place them in a strategic position in helping children.

### Role of the Counselor

Few schools, if any, will find it possible to delegate all counseling responsibilities to teachers. They will find this "extra" assignment is not taken as seriously as some of the teachers' other responsibilities. They will find the majority



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of the faculty untrained and uninterested in attaining sufficient specialized counseling competence. They will also find that most of the teachers are too overloaded to carry on intensive individual counseling, regardless of their interest or ability for these responsibilities. They will find that distinct interests and abilities are needed for successful counseling. They will find it necessary to plan, to define, and to delegate some counseling responsibilities. Because of these and other factors, it is usually necessary for a school to begin a two-pronged approach: (a) to help the entire staff increase its effectiveness in helping pupils, and (b) to select or employ a few people to carry the major load of assigned counseling. These selected counselors can be expected to make such contributions as the following:

1. The counselor has a designated responsibility for counseling. Much of this counseling is supplemental to the work of the teachers in helping pupils with their problems and their plans.
2. The counselor accumulates and organizes basic data about pupils for staff use.
3. The counselor helps teachers with pupil problems that the teachers find difficult.
4. The counselor helps the staff organize its contacts with parents.
5. The counselor helps the staff identify and utilize community referral resources.
6. The counselor helps teachers develop instructional activities more closely related to guidance needs of pupils.
7. The counselor helps the staff develop many of the important guidance services of the school—orientation

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activities, placement services, testing programs, pupil personnel records, follow-up services, and the like.

8. The counselor helps the staff gather, organize, and use educational and occupational information needed by teachers.
9. The counselor helps the staff collect information needed to evaluate and improve the school's program.

### SOME CONTRASTS BETWEEN TEACHING AND COUNSELING<sup>1</sup>

#### *Teaching*

1. The teacher needs to know pupils so that educational objectives are attained and normal growth processes encouraged.

2. The subject matter outcomes (or objectives) to be attained are known by the teacher.

3. The teacher is responsible for encouraging growth toward objectives partially determined by the social order (citizenship, honesty). The teacher has a responsibility for the welfare of the culture.

4. Teaching starts with a group relationship and individual contacts grow out of and return to group activities.

5. The teacher is responsible for the welfare of many children at one time.

6. The teacher carries on most of her work directly with children.

7. The teacher uses skill in group techniques with great frequency—while interviewing skills are used less often.

#### *Counseling*

1. The counselor needs to know pupils in terms of specific problems, frustrations, and plans for the future.

2. The subject matter of the interview is unknown to the counselor and sometimes unknown to the counselee.

3. The counselor is responsible for helping the counselee resolve his own personal problems. The counselor has a responsibility for the welfare of the counselee.

4. Counseling starts with an individual relationship and moves to group situations for greater efficiency or to supplement the individual process.

5. The counselor is responsible for only one person at one time.

6. The counselor works with and through many people. Referral resources and techniques are of considerable importance.

7. The counselor uses interviewing skills as a basic technique.

<sup>1</sup>Developed by the staff of the Institute of Counseling, Testing and Guidance, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.



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### *Teaching*

8. The teacher uses tests, records, and inventories to assist the instructional (educational) process.

9. The teacher has many tools (curriculum outlines, books, workbooks, visual and auditory aids) to increase her effectiveness.

10. The teacher needs to increase her information relating to instructional activities.

11. The teacher has a "compelled" relationship. Children are required to be there.

12. The teacher deals with children, the majority of whose adjustments are happy and satisfying.

13. The teacher is much concerned with the day-to-day growth of pupils and with their general development.

14. The skillful teacher tries to develop many abilities which increase her instructional effectiveness.

### *Counseling*

8. The counselor uses tests, records, and inventories to discover factors relating to a problem. The results are used for problem-solving (therapeutic) purposes.

9. The counselor has no tools which are used with all the counselees. She must help the counselee discover first problems and their causes and then the individually appropriate sources of assistance.

10. The counselor needs information not frequently used by teachers; information about occupations, training institutions, colleges, apprenticeship programs, community occupational opportunities, placement, referral resources, social service agencies, diagnostic and clinical instruments.

11. The most effective counseling comes from a voluntary association. The counselee must want help and must feel that the counselor can be helpful.

12. The counselor's clients are disturbed by frustrations. They are often characterized by emotional tensions, previous disappointments, and lack of confidence.

13. The counselor is concerned with the counselee's immediate problems and choices, but she is also interested in helping the counselee develop workable long-term plans.

14. The skillful counselor tries to develop many of the abilities used by a wide variety of highly technical specialists: psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, test technicians, occupational information specialists, social workers, visiting teachers, juvenile delinquency workers, placement officers, and the like.

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### Organizing for Counseling

Each school approaches its organizational problems somewhat differently. Certain factors, however, should be considered by all schools:

1. A high level of counseling competence is needed. Therefore, the administrator should select the assigned counselors in such a way that competence is assured. The rapidity with which the program can be developed, the counselor load, and other similar aspects hinge upon the number of competent counselors available.
2. The number of counselees per counselor should not be excessive. In general, the fewer the better. As many staff members as possible should be provided if the level of counseling competence can be maintained.
3. Counselees should remain with the same counselor as long as possible.
4. It is usually advisable for all counselors to carry on some teaching activities.
5. Counselors need time, space, and other facilities. Although no final evidence is available as yet, it is probably desirable for each counselor to have a maximum of 100 counselees for each daily hour of counseling time. A more desirable ratio of 75 counselees per hour of counseling time should be sought. It is also necessary to free counselors to work with teachers and parents and to carry on their other important activities. Meeting rooms, cumulative folders, testing resources, and files of educational and occupational data are needed.



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6. It is decidedly advantageous for counselors to meet with parents.
7. Counselors need an opportunity to work with teachers. A clear recognition of this activity should be provided in all organizational plans.
8. Community and school staff contacts should be made so that an effective program of referral can be used.
9. The counseling service requires the understanding cooperation of the entire staff.
10. An in-service program for the entire staff and another more intensive plan for the assigned counselors will be needed in most schools.
11. Clerical services must be made available to the counselors if they are to use their time in the most effective way.

### Qualities of the Counselor

The staff members selected to do the assigned counseling will need to have certain attributes. Such characteristics as the following will be helpful:

1. A sincere interest in pupils and a real desire to help them.
2. A great deal of experience in informal counseling.
3. A desire to improve self, to secure further training.
4. Excellent working relationships with the rest of the staff.
5. Real skill in interviewing, in test, and record utilization.
6. The ability to understand people.
7. A genuine desire to help pupils grow in self-analysis and self-directiveness.

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8. A wholesome and optimistic outlook on life.
9. Successful personal adjustments—the ability to solve one's individual difficulties in desirable ways.
10. An appreciation and understanding of the entire educational program.
11. An understanding of child growth and development.
12. A well-developed philosophy of democratic human relationships.

Energetic and intelligent administrative leadership is necessary if these factors are encompassed in the developing counseling program. The entire staff must be helped to see the importance of counseling, the important contributions each member can make, and the ways by which a coordinated and cooperative program can be built.

### Duties, Standards, and Qualifications of Counselor<sup>2</sup>

#### *Duties of the Counselor*

A. Providing counseling and its supporting activities to assist individuals to make adjustments and to formulate and carry out plans.

Providing counseling depends upon more than the presence in a school of a person having competence to establish and carry on counseling relationships. The person so qualified must also be able to take active responsibility for organizing, giving direction to, and carrying on the essential supporting activities. Collectively the supporting activities, with counseling, constitute the services basic to the organized guidance program. Inherent in organizing the basic services of the guidance program is the obligation to establish working relationships within the school and with community agencies for a maximum use of resources for individual adjustment and planning. The basic services of the guidance program are:

<sup>2</sup> *Duties, Standards, and Qualifications of Counselors*, Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C., Misc. 3314-1, February, 1949. One of a series of reports on counselor preparation.



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1. Organizing systematic means for obtaining, recording, and using significant individual data.
2. Obtaining and making available the information needed for individual planning of occupational goals and educational programs, and for using school and community resources to solve other personal problems.
3. Providing organized means for assisting individuals to satisfy their need for paid employment during the school year and summer vacations as well as upon leaving school, also for assisting them to enter their next educational steps beyond the school.
4. Using regularly both systematic and special follow-up contacts with former students to secure important data.

B. Aiding school administrators, teachers, other staff members, and parents to perform better their daily tasks of working with individuals by:

1. Interpreting the guidance program and securing their support.
2. Providing them with data which will help them to understand the individual and his needs.
3. Giving direct assistance to teachers who have exceptional pupils or those who present problems.
4. Developing in-service training programs.

C. Presenting and interpreting data through guidance services as a partial basis for total school program planning.

The data about individuals, groups, and community normally secured through the activities of the guidance program are valuable beyond a direct use in counseling. It is a responsibility of the counselor to see that data are presented and interpreted to those responsible for:

1. Evaluating educational services.
2. Modifying the curriculum and instruction.
3. Assisting out-of-school youth.
4. Effecting favorable public relations.

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### *Qualifications and Training of Counselors*

The qualifications and training of a counselor must be such as to prepare him to fulfill the duties outlined above. His qualifications in these three areas should be evaluated: education, experience, and personal fitness.

#### A. EDUCATION.

1. *General.* A counselor must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and must meet fully the regular State educational requirements for a teacher's certificate valid for the grade level in which the counselor is employed.
2. *Professional.* A counselor must have at least the equivalent of a master's degree with major emphasis in the essential areas of the guidance program. A basic course in "Principles and Practices of the Guidance Program" should be a prerequisite to this training. The essential areas in each of which some training is required are:
  - a. Core areas of training
    - (1) The counseling process
    - (2) Understanding the individual
    - (3) Educational and occupational information
    - (4) Administrative relationships of the guidance program
    - (5) Research and evaluation procedures for counselors.
  - b. Training supplementary to the core areas  
In addition to the above required core areas of training, counselors shall have had or shall secure training in psychology, economics, and sociology.

**B. EXPERIENCE.** A practicing counselor must have had at least 2 years of successful teaching or counseling experience, at least 1 year of cumulative work experience in a field or fields other than school work, 3 to 6 months of supervised counseling experience or internship, and sufficient experience in activities of social



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significance, such as volunteer work in the community, to reveal interest in working with others and to indicate leadership ability.

C. **PERSONAL FITNESS.** The personal qualifications of a prospective and practicing counselor can be placed in four groups: scholastic aptitude, interests, activities, and personality factors. Any one of these sources may not provide sufficient evidence, but the four combined should indicate a pattern of interest in and an ability to work with people.

1. *Scholastic aptitude.* The scholastic aptitude of the prospective, as well as that of the practicing counselor, must be adequate to enable him to complete graduate work successfully in a university.
2. *Interests.* Both the prospective and practicing counselor must be interested in working with people. Whether a person possesses this type of interest could be determined by his stated interests, his measured interests, and his activities record.
  - a. Stated interests of the individual may be considered as an indication of his qualifications as a counselor. However, such stated interests should be verified by checking the personal references furnished by the counselor to establish his integrity and his character, and by noting information given in various types of records furnished.
  - b. Measured interests should be used to gather evidence of his interest in working with people.
3. *Activities.* A counselor must have a record of working with people. The activities of a person can be determined by examining his record in school, in college, and in the community. If his record in high school and college shows that he has been busy in extra-instructional activities, this may be evidence that he is interested in working with people. If it shows that he has been active in such community organizations as church, civic clubs, Scout work, or Community

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Chest, further evidence of interest in working with people is provided. Personal references given by the person desiring to be a counselor may aid in determining his community activities.

4. *Personality factors.* The personality characteristics of a prospective or practicing counselor must indicate his emotional maturity as demonstrated by the organization of his personal life—particularly as evidenced by his ability to live in a social order and to participate in community affairs. An examination of the role he has played in the community may reveal civic leadership, a feeling of responsibility, and a capacity to inspire confidence. Further evidence of a well-adjusted personality can be obtained from records, family life, references (what others say about his personal traits, his character, and his place in the community), clinical interviews, and by the use of one or more tests of personality. In so far as possible it should be determined that he possesses qualities such as patience, tact, poise, a sense of humor, a sense of worth, a freedom from withdrawing tendencies, the ability to profit from mistakes, and the ability to take criticism. Another important requirement of both the counselor and the prospective counselor is that of personal appearance. This includes good health, pleasing voice, magnetism, and freedom from annoying mannerisms. Any physical deformity should be appraised and considered in the light of its effect on counselees.

### *Code of Professional Ethics for Counselors*

- A. A counselor, in respecting the dignity of each counselee, gives him his primary allegiance. A counselor accepts responsibility for safeguarding the confidential relationship between him and the counselee. In his writing, speaking, and interviewing he makes it clear that counselors have a relationship



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to counselees similar to that of lawyers to clients, or doctors to patients.

- B. A counselor accepts all who seek his assistance but does not allow the demand for his services to dilute the quality of his services. If the demand is greater than can be handled satisfactorily, the counselor informs the proper administrative authority of his inability to provide adequate counseling services. Until additional services can be made available, he selects those in greatest need of counseling.
- C. A counselor actively promotes the concept of counseling as a profession. He attempts to get others not to take counseling responsibility beyond their limitations.
- D. A counselor enlists the cooperation and assistance of other staff workers and administrators in providing necessary supporting services for the counseling program of the school.
- E. A counselor, when necessary, refers counselees to appropriate persons or agencies and takes steps to make such referrals possible and to insure continuity in counseling.
- F. A counselor as a staff member is a part of the school team, and accepts his share of general school duties. He resists those which interfere with his duties as counselor, either because of their incompatibility or because they make undue inroads on his time.
- G. A counselor seeks employment only on the basis of his qualifications. He does not exploit his political or non-professional affiliations for this purpose.
- H. A counselor continues to grow professionally.
- I. A counselor maintains active cooperation with some professional group or groups.
- J. A counselor continuously engages in research designed to contribute to his personal growth or to that of the profession. He plans such research so that the counselor-counselee relationships are not violated.
- K. A counselor periodically evaluates his work and seeks the assistance of others who can help him improve the quality of his work.

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### Steps in Organizing a Guidance Program

No two schools will develop their programs in the same way. In each system local factors must be taken into account. The following suggestions illustrate some of the major steps<sup>3</sup> to be taken as the program develops.

1. Think of guidance services in terms of an organized program within the total school program using whatever assets and facilities are at hand.
2. Assist the staff in a study of the needs, problems, and characteristics of the pupils. Identify the necessity for improving the guidance services and the kinds of services needed.
3. Plan for consistent understanding and support to the guidance program through administrative policy and practice.
4. Take stock of the qualifications of the school staff; experience, training, and interest in guidance work; essential background, suitability of personality, and leadership qualities. Inventory the resources outside of the school. Locate helpful parental, community, and regional sources of assistance.
5. Take an inventory of services now being rendered and activities now being carried on either as integral parts of the regular school program or as special guidance services which may be considered as essential to the guidance program.
6. Make job analyses of each of the basic services of the guidance program. The guidance services will be re-examined in the light of these job analyses.
7. Designate a leader, or leaders, and assign responsibilities to members of the staff according to the job analyses, and make necessary load and time adjustments.
8. Establish an in-service training program in the light of the survey of staff qualifications and based on the job analyses of the basic guidance services. Take advantage of all accessible resources in and out of school.
9. Provide regular administrative controls for and supervisory

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<sup>3</sup> Developed by the staff of the Institute of Counseling, Testing and Guidance, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.



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help to those charged with specific responsibility in the guidance program.

10. Plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidance program.

### The Administrator Moves

It will be necessary to translate these general stages into specific moves. Here the administrator shows the quality of his abilities. As has already been indicated, each development will need to be made in terms of the specific school situation.

#### The Role of the Administrator in Organizing the Guidance Program <sup>4</sup>

##### *What He Does*

1. Makes a preliminary survey of existing school services, facilities, and resources. These include:
  - a. Over-all educational program.
  - b. Pupil needs and problems.
  - c. Staff readiness.
  - d. Physical facilities.
  - e. Personal educational objectives.
  - f. Community readiness.
  - g. Financial situation of school.

If his findings indicate a reasonable chance for success and he decides to work at the project, the administrator then plans further action.

2. Consults with authorities from colleges, state departments, and the U. S. Office of Education.
  - a. Takes courses in guidance.
  - b. Reads books in the field.
  - c. Visits schools where guidance services are in operation.

##### *Why He Does It*

1. Because administrative support and enthusiasm are essential to the development of an effective program of guidance services within the over-all framework of the school. Since the administrator will be held responsible in case of the failure of the guidance program, it is important that he estimate the program's chances for success before beginning.

2. To gain adequate orientation to some of the organizational problems that are likely to be encountered in his own school. To discover and build working relationships with persons able to serve as consultants in the developmental stages of the local program.

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<sup>4</sup> Prepared by George Myers, Department of Effective Living, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.

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## *What He Does*

3. Discusses the project with school board to insure general approval and budgetary support.

4. Arranges faculty meetings to locate best approaches for the local school.

- a. With key leaders (principals and supervisors).
- b. With faculty as a whole.

5. Arranges for the selection of a guidance council of faculty members, based on results of a faculty survey blank or other device.

6. Decides with staff on the best approach to be made to the program, on basis of study of various possible approaches. Possible approaches:

- a. Survey of existing services.
- b. Drop-out and follow-up studies.
- c. Study of pupil problems and needs.

7. Provides sufficient time so that the approach chosen can be adequately carried out.

8. Appoints a capable and qualified staff member to head up the guidance program.

9. Supplements his staff with persons who have a guidance point of view and who are able to function in one or more aspects of the guidance program.

10. Arranges the schedule to permit a minimum of one counseling period daily for each 100 pupils.

11. Provides adequate cumulative record forms and designates responsibility for keeping records up to date.

## *Why He Does It*

3. To insure support and provide orientation.

4. To secure faculty participation and support. To orient the faculty members. To make the guidance program an integral part of the total school program.

5. Cooperative effort is important and necessary. To insure that each staff member understands and appreciates the aims and objectives of the program-to-be.

6. So that every staff member has a part to play in the selection and carrying out of the approach. It is important that the evolving guidance program have a basis in real facts about the school and its pupils.

7. Because a good program requires the active support of the faculty to insure success.

8. Leadership and coordination are needed for the success of the program.

9. Because adequately trained and qualified faculty members are needed to develop and carry on effective guidance.

10. Because adequate counseling time is needed to insure an effective program.

11. Because adequate and systematic pupil-information is required for effective counseling.



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### *What He Does*

12. Provides other necessary materials and supplies needed for the program.

13. Assigns to the librarian the responsibility for arranging guidance materials attractively and conveniently in the school library.

14. Arranges in-service training activities for all staff members.

15. Encourages staff members to secure needed guidance training through college courses, summer work experience in non-teaching occupations, and so forth.

16. Designates a staff member to be responsible for the testing program.

17. Provides suitable private quarters for counseling interviews.

18. Assigns responsibility for planning orientation activities and other supplementary services of the guidance program.

19. Frees counselors from non-guidance, "busy-work" functions.

20. Makes arrangements for his school to secure complete records on all transfer pupils.

21. Devotes a reasonable portion of his time to supervision of the guidance program.

22. Designates staff members and clerical assistance for studies aimed

### *Why He Does It*

12. Because a good program of guidance services requires tools and materials.

13. Because orientational and informational aspects of the program require that materials be made available to students and staff members.

14. Staff members must understand the guidance services of the school, and become skillful in their interpretation and application.

15. Because such training and experiences will assist teachers to shift their thinking from subjects to pupils and their special needs and problems.

16. Because coordination is needed to insure that testing be adequate, yet free from unnecessary duplication.

17. Effective counseling requires suitable space, free from interruptions, and a setting which makes for easy conversation.

18. Effective orientation requires carefully planned and coordinated activities.

19. Effective counseling is a full-time job. Students need to see the counselor as a friend rather than as a part-time disciplinarian and general "flunky."

20. Adequate and continuous pupil information is needed for effective guidance.

21. Because enthusiastic administrative interest and support are vital to effective counseling.

22. Evaluation will provide the basis for the continuous improve-

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### *What He Does*

at the evaluation of guidance services. Such studies point the way to needed modifications and additions.

23. Continuously interprets the guidance program to the community.

24. Gives credit to his staff for success, and takes personal responsibility for failure, of the guidance program.

### *Why He Does It*

ment and extension of existing guidance services.

23. Community understanding and support are needed for effective guidance services.

24. Because guidance services are a direct responsibility of the administrator.

## Some Problems of Interviewing

There are a number of specific questions that relate to the organization for interviewing as a part of the over-all guidance program. Some of these questions can be answered only by the local administrator.

### Who Should Interview?

All members of the staff will do some interviewing as an integral part of their daily responsibilities. Some teachers will talk with individual pupils on topics related to the classroom. Other teachers will meet with pupils and discuss quite personal and individual topics. Nearly all the teachers will at some time or other talk with parents. Teachers need help to do a better job in this kind of interviewing.

However, other staff members will need to be selected to carry on interviewing as one of their assigned responsibilities. This interviewing deals with the present problems and the future plans of the counselees. Since this interviewing is assigned and since it may become quite involved, it requires considerable ability, insight, training, and experience. Staff members should be selected or employed in terms of the responsibilities of a counselor as these duties have been defined by the local school.



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### How Much Interviewing Time?

There is, as yet, very little uniformity in practice regarding time for interviewing. Since almost all schools have started or are starting from "scratch," it will probably be a long time before ample time is available. It is probably better to begin with a modest allotment and let the service prove itself rather than to do a poorer job with a greater amount of time.

Very little research is available to indicate the time required for interviewing. However, an increasing number of writers suggest a daily period for counseling for each 75-100 counselees. This would make it possible to devote an average of two periods each year to each counselee. If counselees stayed with the same counselor for a four-year period, the counselor would have an average of eight periods per counselee. Although there is little research to justify these recommendations, practice in the field would tend to confirm their reasonableness. This time should be available for counseling and does not include time for work with teachers and with other phases of the guidance program.

### Who Should Be Interviewed?

This is indeed an important question. Counselors have to hoard their time. There is too little time and there are too many things to do. It is necessary for the counselor to do some selecting and to make careful plans for the wise use of his time. In too many situations counselors are spending their precious hours working exclusively with problem cases, failing students, and pupils with low academic aptitude. The majority are given no help, and many of the pupils desperately needing attention go unnoticed and unaided.

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Some criteria to determine the distribution of work will, therefore, be helpful. The counselor should ask himself:

1. What kind of problems can I best handle?
2. What activities could be better handled through group situations?
3. What instruments and inventories can I use to identify those pupils needing help?
4. How can I enlist the help of other staff members in detecting emerging maladjustments? How can the staff be encouraged to make more accurate and more immediate referrals?
5. Can I learn to scan the records, test results, autobiographies, and other materials to identify possible pupil difficulties?
6. How can I use group meetings to help pupils study their own situations and to inventory their need and readiness for counseling? How can I best orient them to the ways I can be most helpful?
7. How can I best identify and learn to use referral resources so that others may make their distinctive contributions?
8. How can I avoid getting involved in routine procedures that contribute little to my counseling?
9. How can I improve my efficiency so that I continually become more productive?
10. How can I learn to strive for the attainable and not dissipate my energies chasing rainbows?

### Interviewing and Group Activities

The group situations in the school should not be sharply separated from the interviewing program. There is some research that indicates the value of planning *both* rather



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than relying on either. The instructional staff has the opportunity to implement many if not most of the plans made during the interview. Unless these plans are properly executed in the group situation, the planning will have been of little avail.

It has already been suggested that many informational and discussional types of assistance can be most efficiently cared for in group settings. The counselor finds many of these common needs through the interview. The group can then be used to give further attention to such needs.

There are other extremely important contributions that can only be made by the use of group techniques. The advantages of group techniques are the following:

1. The counselee needs to be studied and understood in his social groups. An understanding of the pupil is not possible without this information.
2. Many of the counselee's difficulties can only be resolved in group relationships. The interview may help to identify the difficulty and to suggest some solutions. But the counselee must implement these plans in his own social relationships.
3. The group approach is in itself an analysis technique. Information can be gathered that would not be divulged in the highly personal interview. The individual is less "on the spot" as a member of a group. He feels security because of the group. He is willing to suggest topics that might prove embarrassing if he were alone with the counselor.

### Should Interviewees Be Assigned?

There are several advantages on either side of this question. Freedom of movement by counselee to counselor

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encourages a desirable counseling relationship. Counselors can specialize and become more proficient in distinctive areas.

On the other hand, there are certain values to more organized assignment. The counselors can stay with the same group of counselees for a period of years. If all pupils are assigned, there is less likelihood that some individuals will go unnoticed when they should be getting assistance. The counselor has a greater sense of obligation when counselees are assigned to him.

If the school has competent counselors, it will usually find it expedient to organize the counseling program under an assignment plan. This plan should provide for maximum continuity between counselor and counselee. In addition, it should always be possible for a counselee, a parent, or a counselor to request a transfer.

### Interviewing and Discipline

The question of disciplining through the interview has been much debated. Some authorities have taken the position that the counselor cannot be involved in discipline and continue as a counselor. Still others have insisted that "good" discipline is counseling and that many people (parents, teachers, administrators) have to do both.

The argument cannot be resolved here. It can be pointed out, however, that the following factors should be taken into account in a discussion of the issue:

1. The counselor holds a staff and not a line position. As a staff officer he cannot administer discipline.
2. The counselor should not become labeled as one who inflicts punishment. Such a reputation will do much to destroy his effectiveness as a counselor.



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3. The counselor can and should do many things to make the enactment of discipline less necessary.
4. The counselor can gather most of the basic data for the administrator so that he can discipline more intelligently.
5. As much counseling as possible should *precede* and *follow* the disciplining period.
6. The counselor should be carrying on so many non-disciplinary types of activities that he is known and respected as a counselor.

### Should Interviewers Teach?

If the school has a sufficient number of competent counselors, it will often be helpful for them to do some teaching. This procedure is suggested because:

1. As teachers, the counselors are accepted and respected. The teachers feel that the counselors understand the difficult problems the teachers face.
2. The counselors will continue to appreciate and understand the instructional program of the school. They can be more helpful in curricular reorganization. They can more clearly understand those pupil problems growing out of classroom situations. They will also be more understanding of the teachers' point of view.
3. As teachers, they have another method of contacting and understanding the pupils.
4. As teachers, they have a number of group situations to use for that type of help that can be best handled in a group.

### Some Organizational Problems

There are a number of questions each school system must answer for itself. In answering these questions the school

## ORGANIZING THE COUNSELING PROGRAM

must consider the entire educational program and the guidance services as a part of that educational program. The interview as one of the techniques of counseling must be related to the adequacy of all the guidance services.

1. Is the guidance program concerned with all the pupils or is it primarily interested in problem cases and typical youngsters?
2. Are guidance and instructional services synonymous or are there distinctive features of each?
3. Can teachers do the whole job or is there a need for designated counselors?
4. Should counselors spend most of their time on case activities or should part of their time be spent with teachers?
5. Can guidance services be carried on through group activities or is there a need for individual work?
6. Are guidance services a matter of concern to secondary schools only or are they also essential in the elementary schools?
7. Should the school assume the entire responsibility for the guidance of youth or is this a responsibility of school, home, and community?
8. Should the guidance program be organized as a line or as a staff service?
9. Is the guidance program largely concerned with individual counseling or does it have a role to play in the improvement of curriculum and administrative practices?
10. Is the guidance program responsible for testing, follow-up, placement, and occupational information or are these shared responsibilities with the guidance service providing primary leadership?



# 7

## Case Materials for Discussion

THE FOLLOWING CASE materials are included to serve as a means for encouraging discussions. The topics presented are not intended to serve as a guide to be followed. Many of these topics indicate procedures the counselor *should not* follow. The appropriate answers are not suggested. These materials are included to stimulate careful consideration of the points of view needed and the better procedures to be followed.

These materials should be used to identify the additional information needed by the counselor. Enough material has been included to serve as a guide to the kinds of additional data that must be gathered before any action is taken.

### The Case of Harry

**Counselor's Contact.** Harry appeared at the Adult Counseling Center evidencing considerable tension. He paced back and forth in the outer office. When he entered the counselor's office he said that he was very anxious to get some help.

**Statement of Problem.** Harry is a salesman for a large line of electrical appliances. He has been doing very well. The position of regional sales manager is due to open soon.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

Harry is in line (by tenure and sales record) for the position. He has just heard, indirectly, that he is not going to be promoted. He wants to quit his present job and find another type of work.

**Identifying Data.** Harry is 46 years old. He has been with his present company for nine years. Before that he has worked for a newspaper (handling ads), for a construction company (truck driver), in a large manufacturing plant (drill operator), for an insurance company (claim adjuster), and in a variety of short-term jobs. He never stayed with one position for more than three years, felt dissatisfied with all these jobs. He expresses a feeling of satisfaction with his present concern but was exceedingly critical of his boss. He feels that the boss is playing favorites and that he is discriminating against Harry.

**Family Data.** Harry is married (four years) and has two children, ages two years and four months. His wife is 36 years old and is a former school teacher. She graduated from college and worked for twelve years. Harry feels that she misses the freedom and the salary she enjoyed before marriage. They have not been able to find suitable living quarters in a desirable section of the city. Harry's modest salary does little more than provide the minimum essentials. Harry is not able to drive new cars and dress as well as he formerly did.

**Personal-Social Data.** Harry is a tall, good-looking individual. He seems quite emotional and expresses vigorous likes and dislikes. He is quite positive and opinionated on a wide variety of topics. He speaks rather critically of most of the people he has worked for.

Harry dropped out of high school at the end of his second year. He was a fair student in school and encountered no



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

serious academic difficulties. He was an outstanding athlete for the first two years and was on several all-state teams. He was acclaimed one of the most promising athletes in the state until a football injury during his second year prevented further participation in athletics.

**Test Data.** Harry was given a number of tests at the testing center.

Otis (adult)—I.Q. 126

Kuder Preference (in percentiles)

Mechanical .....	98
Computational .....	10
Scientific .....	85
Persuasive .....	99
Artistic .....	20
Literary .....	5
Musical .....	8
Social Service .....	10
Clerical .....	12

Strong Vocational Interest

High ratings—Engineer, Fireman, Policeman

Low ratings—Teacher, Y. M. C. A. Secretary, Social Worker

### Statements for Discussion

1. Harry is obviously maladjusted at home.
2. Early athletic success has so inflated his ego that everyday living has become difficult.
3. His interests indicate that he is genuinely interested in the selling field.
4. Harry should have continued his job as a truck driver for the construction company.
5. His occupational changes prove that he is occupationally unstable.
6. He is being unfairly treated and the counselor should encourage him to get a position with another similar company.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

7. Harry should confront his boss with the information and threaten to quit unless he gets the promotion.

8. Harry has undoubtedly developed some bad habits in his relations with his superior officers.

9. Harry's marriage was unfortunate and there is little he can do under his present circumstances.

10. Harry's basic problem rests in the fact that he does not like to have a reduced personal income because of his family obligations.

### Counseling Considerations

1. It is important for the counselor to give Harry a warm and accepting reception.

2. The counselor should allow Harry ample opportunity to "unload" by telling his story as completely as he cares to tell it.

3. Since Harry is obviously at fault, the counselor should point out the mistakes he has made.

4. The counselor should tell Harry to go ahead and quit because he (the counselor) can easily find another job for him.

5. It would be desirable for the counselor to interview Harry's wife and get her side of the story.

6. Harry's earlier school and job experiences have nothing to do with his present problems and no time should be spent collecting background information.

7. Since the problem is primarily one growing out of housing, the counselor should immediately refer Harry to the housing bureau.

8. Because of Harry's high interests (Kuder) in the mechanical and scientific fields, the counselor should encourage him to take evening school work in these fields.



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

9. It is doubtful if the counselor can be of much assistance without additional information.

### The Case of Paul

**Counselor's Contact.** Paul came to the counselor's office as a potential drop-out. The school has a requirement that all drop-outs must first clear with the counselor before leaving school.

**Identifying Data.** Male, age 18 years old, junior in high school, enrolled in college preparatory course. Repeated the 6th grade.

**Family Background.** Middle socio-economic background. Father and mother living. Family able to pay for college education. Father regularly employed as a well-paid machinist. One other child, a girl, graduated from college as a superior student, is now married and living away from home. Both parents finished elementary school; neither graduated from high school. Parents interested in Paul's education and would like to have him go to college.

**School Information.** Paul's school experiences have not been very successful. He had trouble getting off to a good start and was never very interested in school work. With the mutual consent of teacher and parents, he repeated the sixth grade to strengthen his work in the fundamentals. He has been absent whenever possible.

His school record for the last three years is as follows:

9th grade		10th grade		11th grade	
English	.....F	English	.....D	English	.....D
Social Studies	...C	Social Studies	...C	Social Studies	...B
Mathematics	....D	Science	.....B	Industrial Arts	...A
Science	.....B	Spanish	.....D	Spanish	.....E

Teachers report that Paul is uninterested and unattentive

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

in his classroom work. He does not show any real drive. The industrial arts teacher does not agree with the other teachers. This teacher feels that Paul is an able and misunderstood pupil. He also believes that Paul should be encouraged to go into some phase of vocational training.

### Test Data.

#### 1. Academic aptitude

California Mental Maturity ..I.Q. 114 (10th grade)
Otis Self-administering .....I.Q. 117 ( 9th grade)
California M.M. ....I.Q. 106 ( 6th grade)

#### 2. Achievement

Iowa Education Development Test (norms for 11th grade)

Social Studies .....	60th percentiles
Natural Science .....	70th percentiles
Correctness in Writing .....	10th percentiles
Quantitative Thinking .....	90th percentiles
Reading Social Studies .....	50th percentiles
Reading Natural Science .....	60th percentiles
Reading Literature .....	12th percentiles
Use of sources of information ..	10th percentiles

#### 3. Vocational interests

Kuder Preference (norms for 10th grade)

Mechanical .....	95th percentiles
Computational .....	20th percentiles
Scientific .....	90th percentiles
Persuasive .....	10th percentiles
Artistic .....	15th percentiles
Literary .....	5th percentiles
Musical .....	5th percentiles
Social Service .....	15th percentiles
Clerical .....	55th percentiles

### Statements for Discussion

1. In view of Paul's academic record, he should be encouraged to drop out of school.



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

2. It was a serious mistake for Paul to take a college preparatory course.

3. Evidently Paul's parents are causing the problem and they should encourage Paul to drop out of school.

4. Paul's parents are interested in realizing some of their own unfilled ambitions through Paul's college career.

5. Paul does not have sufficient academic aptitude to succeed in high school.

6. It is obvious that Paul has had unsatisfactory elementary school experiences that are basic causes of his present difficulties.

7. Paul's grades in high school indicate that he cannot hope to complete his high school work successfully.

8. Paul's grades in science and in industrial arts indicate real potentialities for college work in engineering.

9. Paul's poor work is due to poor reading and study skills.

10. The I.Q. scores are sufficiently high to indicate that Paul can succeed in almost any college curriculum.

11. Paul's poor high school record indicates that the I.Q. of 106 is probably the correct one.

12. Paul's work in English and Spanish shows very inadequate language ability.

13. The achievement test results indicate that, on the average, Paul is working up to ability.

14. The fact that he has a brilliant older sister causes his lack of interest in school work.

15. Paul has the right combination of interests (Kuder) to indicate real ability in mechanical and scientific fields.

16. Paul has the characteristics (Kuder and Iowa) that are most appropriate in the high school program.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

17. There is enough evidence to show that Paul should be encouraged to drop out of school.

18. It is obvious that Paul cannot get through college.

19. The counselor should spend some time studying Paul's reading and study skills.

20. The industrial arts teacher's recommendations should be followed and Paul should be encouraged to transfer to a vocational program.

21. A great deal of additional information is needed before Paul can make intelligent plans for the future. What information do you think is needed?

### Counseling Considerations

1. Since Paul is not of college ability, his parents should be so advised.

2. The counselor can do little to help Paul succeed in high school.

3. The counselor should immediately help Paul find a field for training in vocational education.

4. The counselor should administer a reading and a study skills test.

5. Paul's actual achievement is better than his grades. The counselor should encourage him to work harder.

6. The counselor should encourage Paul to continue in school in order that he might take college work in engineering.

7. The counselor should study Paul's elementary school record to detect possible problems.

8. The counselor should encourage Paul to hire a tutor to help him raise his grades.



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

### The Case of Jane

**Counselor's Contact.** Jane graduated from Rockport High School in June. In September she comes into the counselor's office for help. Her plans have always included securing a degree in medicine. She has now found that none of the medical schools will give her any assurance that she will be admitted after completing her pre-medical college work. She has tried almost all the medical schools and each one has responded in a very negative way. She would like to have the counselor help her decide what she ought to do.

**Identifying Data.** Jane is 18 years of age. She completed a college preparatory course with primary emphasis on science. She ranked second in a graduating class of 124.

**Family Background.** Jane comes from an upper class socio-economic group. Her father is a successful doctor in Rockport. Jane is an only child. Family life has been very pleasant and the family is closely knit and very happy. Jane is not very attractive and has had few "boy friends." As a result, she has few friends of either sex and has participated most actively in the family's social and recreational activities. There has been little evident family pressure for her to go into medicine.

**School Information.** Jane has always been a superior student. Her school work has always been carefully prepared. She studies very diligently and spends a great deal of time "with the books." Her teachers have always been very enthusiastic about her school work. Her grades in English and in Latin have been of the very best. Her work in science and math has been good. She has never received any grade in high school lower than a "B" and is very proud of her regular appearance on the school's honor roll.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

She has participated in very few of the school's extra-class activities. She was a rather inactive member of the Service Club, and an enthusiastic assistant editor of the newspaper. She did not participate in any of the athletic or musical activities.

### Test Data.

#### 1. Academic aptitude

Kuhlmann-Anderson	I.Q. 106 ( 4th grade)
Otis	I.Q. 110 ( 9th grade)
California (short form)	I.Q. 108 (11th grade)
American Council Psych.	
	30th percentile of college freshmen

#### 2. Achievement

Iowa Education Development (12th grade norms)	
Social Studies	60th percentiles
Natural Science	35th percentiles
Correctness in Writing	95th percentiles
Quantitative Thinking	50th percentiles
Reading Social Studies	70th percentiles
Reading Natural Science	40th percentiles
Reading Literature	90th percentiles
Use of sources of information	80th percentiles

#### 3. Vocational interests

##### Kuder Preference (11th grade norms)

Mechanical	10th percentiles
Computational	15th percentiles
Scientific	20th percentiles
Persuasive	25th percentiles
Artistic	85th percentiles
Literary	98th percentiles
Musical	90th percentiles
Social Service	95th percentiles
Clerical	30th percentiles

**Problems Presented.** During the first interview, Jane presented a number of problems to the counselor. In chronological order they are:



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

1. How can I get into a good medical school?
2. Do you think I can get into medical school if I make an outstanding record in my pre-medical work?
3. Do you think I should go into some other field of work?
4. What would my parents say if I decided to do something else?
5. Do you think I could succeed in college?
6. Can one succeed in college and still have some fun?
7. Should I take an available job as receptionist in my father's office and see what happens?

### Statements for Discussion

1. The counselor is no longer concerned with Jane's problems since she is no longer attending Rockport High School.

2. Jane's problems are typical of those of an over-achiever. She should be encouraged to work less diligently if she goes to college.

3. It is obvious that Jane has absolutely no chance to be admitted to a good medical school.

4. Her high school work shows that she can easily succeed in any college program.

5. Jane is not really interested in going into medicine.

6. Her lack of adequate social and recreational satisfactions has driven her into an interest in a prestige field.

7. Her interest in medicine grows out of her desire to do something to please and impress her parents.

8. Jane's intense desire to be a good student results from some other feelings of inadequacy or insecurity.

9. Her work in the language fields proves that she has more interest in language than in the sciences.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

10. The high school record really shows that Jane is about equally good in all subject fields.

11. The various I.Q. scores are probably inaccurate since they do not agree with her school record.

12. Her rating on the American Council indicates that Jane could probably succeed in any of the most highly competitive colleges.

13. Jane's scores on the Iowa Achievement Test are in harmony with her school grades.

14. Jane is unusually skillful in study skills.

15. Jane's high school program has been very good and well balanced in view of her medical interests.

16. It is obvious that Jane should select a field of work using her English and writing abilities.

17. Since Jane cannot achieve her primary objective, she should substitute by accepting the position in her father's office.

18. Jane has really missed some of the extra activities in high school and she would like to be sure that she has a good time in college.

### Counseling Considerations

1. The counselor's most important task is to find out why Jane wants to go into medicine.

2. The counselor has a very simple responsibility—to help Jane find a medical school she can get in.

3. Since Jane is under considerable tension, the counselor should let her talk from the very beginning of the interview.

4. The counselor has enough evidence to prove that Jane cannot succeed in a medical school. Jane should be informed of this.



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

5. The counselor should get in touch with Jane's parents and persuade them that Jane should not go into medicine.

6. The counselor needs a great deal of additional information. Suggest the kinds of information needed.

7. The counselor should regard this interview as one where information is needed. Jane should be told about the difficulties of succeeding in medical schools.

8. Jane's problems have been occurring for some time. She should have been helped when she first entered high school.

9. Jane and Jane's parents should be bluntly told that Jane is not of college caliber.

10. Jane should be encouraged to go to work until she can find some field other than medicine.

### The Case of Tom

**Counselor's Contact.** Tom came to the counselor's attention as a referral from the sixth grade teacher. The teacher is very concerned with Tom's activities in school. He has been disturbing all of his classmates. Tom, according to the teacher, is a continuous irritant—he makes a lot of noise, deliberately violates room regulations, constantly teases the smaller pupils, refuses to do his school work, and is continually attempting to stir up trouble.

**Identifying Data.** Tom is 13 years old and in the last half of the sixth grade. He is much larger than any of the other boys. Tom did not start school until he was seven years old because of illness. This illness left him with a slight club foot. Although he gets around very well, he is not able to participate in many running sports.

**Family Background.** Tom's parents are divorced. They

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

separated when Tom was three years old. Tom was the only child and lives alone with his mother. His mother works for a large department store. She earns a modest salary. Tom and his mother live very modestly, but they have the basic essentials. Tom and his mother are very "close" to each other. Although his mother is not able to be with him during the day, she is very much interested in Tom's welfare and she spends almost all her evenings with him. Tom has been a problem to the school for several years, but the situation has never been acute.

**School Information.** Tom's school record is spotty; he has done very good and very poor work. His grades have been a little below average, but in geography and nature study he has done outstanding work. His record in arithmetic and reading is poor. He has never had to repeat a grade because each teacher felt he would not be helped by being held back with smaller children. Tom is frequently tardy and is absent more often than the other children. He has few friends and he does not play with the other children in school or out. Several teachers have written anecdotes indicating that Tom has had frequent scraps with other children. The teachers indicated that they did not care for Tom.

**Test Data.** The school system has given Tom a few tests.

### 1. Academic Aptitude

Binet .....I.Q. 118 (First grade)

Kuhlmann-Anderson .....I.Q. 122 (Fifth grade)

### 2. Achievement

Stanford Achievement, Form D (given at the end of the fifth grade)



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

	<i>Grade Equivalent</i>
Paragraph meaning .....	6.0
Word meaning .....	6.2
Language usage .....	5.1
Arithmetic résumé .....	4.9
Arithmetic computation .....	5.0
Literature .....	5.9
Social Studies .....	7.1
Elementary science .....	7.5
Spelling .....	6.0
<i>Average</i> .....	6.0

### Statements for Discussion

1. Tom's most serious problem must be his relationship with his present teacher, since none of the other teachers reported such serious difficulties.
2. Tom's classmates are unsympathetic and the real source of his problems.
3. Tom's aggressive attempts to irritate reflect some maladjustment in the school situation.
4. Tom should be promoted to the eighth grade so he might be with boys of his own size.
5. Tom's physical handicap gives him a feeling of insecurity.
6. He should be encouraged to participate in a large number of competitive activities.
7. The separation of the parents undoubtedly accounts for most of his maladjustments.
8. It would be helpful if Tom had more toys and other material things than the rest of the children.
9. Tom's parents should reunite for his sake.
10. Tom has developed most of his difficulties because of a lack of parental supervision.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

11. Tom has already demonstrated that he can do successful school work.

12. His academic aptitude is such that he should be doing superior work in school.

13. Tom would do better work if he attended regularly.

14. Tom is so "bright" that he irritates the rest of the children.

15. He should try to get along with others.

16. The teacher can do very little for Tom since his problems grow out of his home situation.

### Counseling Considerations

1. The counselor should refuse to handle the problem since it is really the teacher's responsibility.

2. The teacher and the counselor already have enough information to locate the causes of Tom's difficulties.

3. The teacher and the counselor should immediately talk to the mother and tell her that she has to do something with Tom.

4. The school should have worked with Tom in the first few grades.

5. The school needs more information about Tom. Suggest the kinds of data that should be collected.

6. The counselor must do something in group therapy to help Tom.

7. Tom obviously needs a physical examination to detect possible difficulties.

8. The school has already done everything that it could be expected to do.

9. It is apparent that the counselor can learn very little by interviewing Tom.



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

### The Case of Robert

**Counselor's Contact.** Robert came voluntarily to see the school counselor about his plans for the following year.

**Identifying Data.** Male, age 18, senior in small urban high school located in good socio-economic neighborhood.

**Family Data.** Father and mother are both living. Father's occupation is stated by Robert to be sales manager. Mother's chief interest is stated by Robert to be artistic. He has an older brother and a younger sister. Family financial status is very satisfactory and adequate to meet college expenses, if Robert should attend college.

**Social-Emotional-Personal Data.** Bob is very popular in school with both girls and boys. During his senior year he has been "going steady" with a senior girl who tied for top scholastic honors, and who was very active in extracurricular activities.

**School Record.** Bob transferred to this high school in the tenth grade. He has a high school rank of 60 in a class of 66. Bob has been on the school paper and yearbook staffs, he has been a member of the Dramatics Club, Pep Club, "U" Club, and Photography Club; and he was in football, track, and basketball. His recorded infractions of school regulations are one occasion of smoking in the boys' locker room and two warnings regarding careless and unauthorized driving of his car during noon hour.

**Educational and Vocational Interests.** Bob states his vocational choice is in the field of business or physical education. He has made application to the college of science and arts at the state university.

**Health.** No significant defects: slight postural defect due to slight spine curvature, mild case of acne. Skin is quite pigmented.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

### Test Data.

#### 1. Intelligence

California Test of Mental Maturity	I.Q. 119.
	Given during Soph. Year.
Otis "A" (Higher Form)	I.Q. 116.
	Given during Sr. Year.

#### 2. Achievement

Iowa Educ. Dev. Test (Standard scores for grade 12 only— Norm group, Iowa H. S. students)	
Social Studies background	70
Natural Science background	66
Correctness in Writing	54
Quantitative Thinking	66
Reading Social Studies	72
Reading Natural Sciences	64
Reading Literature	66
Use of sources of information	54

#### 3. Interests

Kuder Preference Record. Given in senior year.

Mechanical	36 percentiles
Computational	6 percentiles
Scientific	7 percentiles
Persuasive	96 percentiles
Artistic	66 percentiles
Literary	74 percentiles
Musical	59 percentiles
Social service	74 percentiles
Clerical	9 percentiles

#### 4. Adjustment

Bell Adjustment Inventory

Home	average
Health	good
Social	aggressive
Emotional	unsatisfactory

#### 5. Other

- A.C.E. Psychological Examination—71st percentile for entering college freshmen  
Co-op English—14th percentile of entering college freshmen



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

### Statements for Discussion

1. Robert's scores on the Otis "A" and California Test of Mental Maturity mean nothing to us until we know the average scores of those in his class.
2. His I.Q., A.C.E. score, and performance on the Iowa Educational Development Test reflect a higher scholastic aptitude than is indicated in his high school performance record.
3. From the information given, it is possible to conclude that the reading scores on the Iowa Educational Development Test indicate that Robert's ability to read and interpret social studies, natural sciences, and literature is well above the average of his class.
4. Robert does not receive needed affection in his home situation. This is borne out by his emotional "unsatisfactory" on the Bell Adjustment.
5. More information concerning his emotional status is needed, since clues revealed by the Bell Adjustment Inventory indicate it might be a deciding factor in the understanding of his case.
6. Robert's I.Q. scores on the California (119) and the Otis (116), given more than two years apart, indicate that he is "losing ground" in intelligence.
7. The Kuder lists some areas in the business field in which Robert may not be particularly interested.
8. The two I.Q. scores can be considered consistent since the difference between the two is within a reasonable margin of error.
9. There are no apparent discrepancies in the information given.
10. There are insufficient data to make any definite recommendations in this case.

## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

11. Robert's rank in his class is a reflection of his participation in many extracurricular activities.

12. Robert's indicated emotional difficulties could probably be traced to his home, in which he rates "average" on the Bell Adjustment Inventory.

13. Robert should have little trouble getting into most vocational fields, since he is very popular and persuasive.

14. Robert would appear to be an under-achiever, since his scholastic aptitude is above average and he ranks at the 9th percentile of his class.

15. Robert has an inferiority complex, due perhaps to his acne, pigmented skin, and postural defect, plus the fact that his girl is getting better grades than he is.

16. His infractions of school regulations were done to gain necessary attention and admiration in overcoming feelings of inferiority.

17. The stated choice in the field of business is not Robert's but his father's wish for him.

18. Robert is overcompensating in extracurricular activities to make up for his lack of scholastic achievement in the eyes of his girl and his classmates.

19. On the basis of the information given, his social adjustment seems normal.

20. An unwise diet is responsible for Robert's skin condition.

21. He is a natural-born leader and would go far in the business field.

22. I.Q. scores indicate Robert has above average intelligence, yet his high school rank is low.

## Counseling Considerations

1. Since Robert has adequate academic aptitude, he should be encouraged to go to college immediately.



## CASE MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION

2. The counselor should try to help Robert find the reasons for his poor school record.

3. Robert should be encouraged to enter the field of physical education.

4. Robert should be encouraged to take a general college course for two years.

5. In view of his academic record, it would be advisable for Robert to work for a while before going to college.

6. The counselor should spend most of the time helping Robert effect better personal adjustments.

7. What additional kinds of information does the counselor need?

# 8

## Evaluating the Interview

EVERY COUNSELOR will find it necessary to try continually to measure the validity of his work. Unless he has evaluated his work, he will be unable to take the correct steps to improve the services he renders. The counselor will have to be very careful in his attempts at evaluation<sup>1</sup> because the interview is a highly complex and volatile relationship. The results of interviewing are very difficult to appraise in objective ways.

### Evaluating Outcomes

The evaluation of interviewing must necessarily be related to the purposes and objectives of the service. Some of these objectives might be stated as:

1. Fewer drop-outs.
2. Fewer failures.
3. Fewer unnecessary course changes.
4. More appropriate educational and vocational planning by the pupils.
5. A reduction in the number and intensity of personal problems.

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information and a selected bibliography see *An Evaluation of Counseling*, Division of Secondary Education, State Board of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1949.



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

6. More adequate information available about pupils.
7. Better placement experiences by pupils.
8. A school curriculum moving ever closer to the needs and problems of the pupils.
9. Pupils becoming more self-directive through increased self-understanding and through successful problem-solving experiences.
10. Higher morale by pupils, teachers, parents, and community citizens.

### Evaluation Criteria <sup>2</sup>

It is recommended that schools in following up counselees with a view to evaluating counseling service make use, if possible, of the personal interview by trained interviewers. If questionnaires are used, it should be recognized that the findings are likely to be biased in the direction of favorable outcomes.

Five criterion items may well be included in the criterion of a follow-up study of counselees. These items are: (1) Occupational adjustment, (2) Educational adjustment, (3) Personal adjustment, (4) Counselee's attitude toward counseling, and (5) Change in counselee's status after counseling.

To obtain information basic to each of these recommended items, certain questions used in the evaluation of the State Consultation Service may be of value. They are listed below for each of the criterion items. In addition, suggestions for categorizing the responses are made to facilitate processing of the findings. In the case of adjustment criterion items, interviewers' ratings are suggested. These ratings refer to an overall rating made by an interviewer after interviewing former counselees. In theory, at least, they represent a total summing of the information which the interviewer was able to obtain during the follow-up process.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.

## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

CRITERION ITEM	SUGGESTED QUESTIONS	SUGGESTED GROUPING OF RESPONSES
	<i>Job Satisfaction</i>	
	Are you satisfied with the type of work of your present position?	Group A: Those who answer "yes" to all the questions.
	Are you satisfied with the prospects of your present position?	Group B: Those who answer "yes" to two.
	Are you satisfied with the pay of your present position?	Group C: Those who answer "yes" to one or more.
	<i>Job Change</i>	
Occupational Adjustment	If you want to change work, why do you want to?	Group A: Those who do not want to change work. Group B: Those who want to change, regardless of their reasons for desiring a change.
	<i>Interviewer's Rating</i>	
	The use of the following instructions to interviewers may be expected to produce satisfactory results. "On a scale of 100, considering a state of average adjustment as 50, indicate your estimate of the occupational adjustment of this counselee at the time of interviewing."	Ratings should be converted to a normalized scale.
	<i>Satisfaction with Training</i>	
Educational Adjustment	Are you satisfied with the type of training you are now taking?	Group A: Very well. Group B: Fairly well. Group C: No.
	<i>Change in Training Desired</i>	
	If you are not satisfied with this type of training, what do you plan to do?	Group A: Those who want to change training. Group B: Those who do not want to change training.



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

CRITERION ITEM	SUGGESTED QUESTIONS	SUGGESTED GROUPING OF RESPONSES
	<i>Interviewer's Rating</i> Instructions to the interviewers should be the same as those for rating the counselee's occupational adjustment.	Interviewer's ratings should be converted to a normalized scale.
Personal Adjustment	<i>Has Perplexing Problems</i> Do you have perplexing personal problems now?	Group A: Those with "many" problems. Group B: Those who respond "few" or "none."
	<i>Social Activities</i> How do you feel about the number of social activities in which you take part?	Group A: Those who "have just about the right amount." Group B: Those who "would like more" or "have too many."
	<i>Interviewer's Rating</i> Instructions to the interviewers should be the same as those for rating the counselee's occupational adjustment.	Interviewer's ratings should be converted to a normalized scale.
Client's Attitude Toward Counseling	<i>Remembrance of Counseling</i> How well do you remember the counseling you received?	Group A: Those who respond "quite well." Group B: Those who respond "fairly well." Group C: Those who respond "hardly at all."
	<i>Helpfulness of Counselor</i> Do you feel that your counselor was helpful?	Group A: Those who reply "very much." Group B: Those who reply "some." Group C: Those who reply "not at all."

## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

### CRITERION ITEM

### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

### SUGGESTED GROUPING OF RESPONSES

#### *Recommended Counseling to Others*

Client's Attitude  
Toward  
Counseling

In the Consultation Service Study, the question, "Have you recommended the State Consultation Service to anyone? If so, to how many persons?" was used. Although this question must be reworded for use in public schools, it seems logical that even in a school, recommending that others go to the counselor for help would be an indication of the client's opinion regarding counseling.

The grouping of responses will depend upon the distribution of responses. In the Consultation Service study, about a third of the clients' responses fell in each of these categories: "3 or more persons," "1 or 2 persons," and "none."

Change in Status

In the evaluative study of the State Consultation Service it was possible to obtain information regarding the client's occupational and educational status at the time of counseling as well as at the time of follow-up. Change in status seemed significant in view of the long period of time which elapsed between counseling and follow-up for the majority of cases. While change in status may not be as pertinent for public schools, it does appear to hold promise as a criterion item. Perhaps the most effective means of using "change in status" for evaluation would be to determine the relationship between the change and plans worked out in counseling. One must not lose sight, however, of the fact that in this criterion item, as in the others, a number of factors other than counseling may have produced the change.

### Facilities and Techniques

The interview can also be evaluated on the basis of the facilities available, pupil and teacher use of these facilities, and through the employment of specific evaluation techniques. The interview may be evaluated by these approaches as follows:



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

1. By the logic and the adequacy of the organization for interviewing—place, time, location, materials, structural organization, and so forth.
2. By the number of clients.
3. By the nature of the problems discussed.
4. By the completeness and the accuracy of the case reports.
5. By the training, experience, and competence of the counselors.
6. By follow-up studies of former clients.
7. By pupil problem surveys.
8. By opinionnaire surveys of counselees, teachers, parents, and employers.
9. By case conference discussions of recordings, case materials, and demonstration interviews.
10. By expert opinion.

### Controlled Experimentation

In the final analysis, the interview will need to be measured by the results of controlled studies. Such studies must be carefully constructed and carried on if the results are to be valid. These studies may take the following forms:

1. Time studies of the extent of participation by counselor and counselee.
2. Studies employing different techniques with paired individuals.
3. Use of equated groups, one group being interviewed and the other not.
4. Studies of the before-and-after reactions of the clients.
5. Studies of the prevalence of problems before and after interviewing.

## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

6. Studies of the before-and-after extent of self-understanding by counselees.
7. Controlled studies of the referrals to the service by teachers and others.
8. Controlled follow-up studies of equated groups to measure the lasting effect of interviewing.

### The Use of Recordings<sup>3</sup>

The advent of recording equipment added an important tool to the counselor's kit. The use of these devices (wire, tape, or disk) can be beneficial in almost all aspects of the interview. These devices are particularly helpful in a process of evaluation.

1. A playback of the interview gives the counselor a chance to re-examine his effectiveness. Freedom from the actual interview makes a more objective evaluation possible.
2. He has an opportunity to study his voice, his inflections, and resulting meanings.
3. He can analyze his use of questions, reflections of client's feelings, provision of information.
4. He can study the appropriateness with which he and the counselee carried their individual and their mutual responsibilities.
5. He can search for clues missed, items that should have had further exploration.
6. He can get other counselors to study these recordings and to assist in evaluating the interview.

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<sup>3</sup> For additional help see *Evaluating Guidance Procedures*, Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C., Misc. 3310, January, 1949.



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

### Using One-Way Screens

When the interviewing offices are constructed, some use should be made of one-way screens. Such facilities will make it possible for a number of people to observe and to listen to the interview in action. These observers can then meet to "case" the entire interview. If each observer uses a checklist or inventory sheet for evaluation and for notes, the conference which follows will usually prove more helpful. If the observers will direct their remarks to the process rather than to the person, the discussion will be less personal.

### Evaluation by Checklist

The use of a list of items to be checked will direct the evaluation to specific aspects of the interview. Each organization will need to construct a questionnaire that takes into consideration the specific purposes of interviewing in that organization. The following checklist is illustrative.

#### Rating the Interview

##### 1. Length

Adequate \_\_\_\_\_

Too short \_\_\_\_\_

Too long \_\_\_\_\_

##### 2. Amount of Talking

Counselor talked too much \_\_\_\_\_

Time well proportioned \_\_\_\_\_

Counselee talked too much \_\_\_\_\_

##### 3. Direction

Counselee given every opportunity to express himself \_\_\_\_\_

Counselee given some opportunity to express himself \_\_\_\_\_

Counselee seldom given an opportunity to express himself \_\_\_\_\_

## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

4. Amount of Interest  
Monotonous, aimless, poor continuity \_\_\_\_\_  
Some interesting spots \_\_\_\_\_  
Interesting, well-directed, good continuity, climaxes \_\_\_\_\_
5. Semantics  
Adapted to counselee \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes inappropriate \_\_\_\_\_  
Very inappropriate \_\_\_\_\_
6. Responsibility  
Counselor assumed most of the responsibility \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor assumed some responsibility \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor gave full responsibility to counselee \_\_\_\_\_
7. Depth  
Superficial \_\_\_\_\_  
Some real problems discussed \_\_\_\_\_  
Very adequate \_\_\_\_\_
8. Interview Controlled by  
Counselor \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselee \_\_\_\_\_  
Neither \_\_\_\_\_  
Both \_\_\_\_\_
9. Response to Counselor  
Counselee responded easily \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselee sometimes responded \_\_\_\_\_  
Counselee resisted, would not respond \_\_\_\_\_
10. Rapport  
High level of rapport maintained throughout \_\_\_\_\_  
Rapport varied \_\_\_\_\_  
Poor rapport \_\_\_\_\_
11. Interaction and Discussion between Counselor and Counselee  
A great deal \_\_\_\_\_  
Some \_\_\_\_\_  
Very little or none \_\_\_\_\_



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

12. Did the counselor define the relationship between himself and the counselee?

Adequately \_\_\_\_\_

Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_

Poorly \_\_\_\_\_

13. Did the counselor pave the way for a follow-up?

Adequately \_\_\_\_\_

Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_

Poorly \_\_\_\_\_

Observer \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Case Number \_\_\_\_\_

### Study Case Materials

It is possible to evaluate the interviews and to suggest improvement through a careful study of the case materials. This method is not as effective as those previously suggested to get at the interview itself. However, this approach has some compensating advantages. The interview is studied in relation to all of the information. Participants in the study of case materials can get an over-view of the entire counseling process. Case conferences of this kind can play a vital role in in-service training.

### Referral and Follow-up

One of the most realistic methods of evaluation is that of follow-up.<sup>4</sup> The counselor has had time to do something about the interview and he is in a position to determine its worth. Follow-up reactions from employers, school officials, parents, and others in contact with the client will also prove helpful. A check on the referral resources used and not used will also provide some information.

<sup>4</sup> For additional information and a selected bibliography see *An Evaluation of Counseling*, Division of Secondary Education, State Board of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1949.

## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

### Evaluation by Test

Another method for evaluating the interview is through the use of tests that have recently been developed. One such study<sup>5</sup> attempts to identify the reactions of effective counselors as contrasted to those of less successful ones. It then devised test items to distinguish between these two groups. In addition to the test itself, the Benz Study reports the following general suggestions:

1. Capitalize on a student's success. Praise is a better incentive for achievement than blame.
2. Understand the role of emotions in human behavior. In many instances emotion over-rules intelligence and dictates behavior. Permit the free expression of emotions during an interview.
3. Don't pass judgment on a student's behavior. Be interested. Listen. Evaluate in your own mind what he says, but don't label "good" or "bad."
4. Understand the mechanisms of abnormal behavior. There is a reason underlying everything one does. If a person is able to satisfy his needs the way most people do he is considered normal. If he is unable to do this, he will quite naturally try to satisfy his needs, but may do it in an exaggerated manner. He is then considered as a "different" or an "abnormal" person.
5. Environment affects one's behavior. "When in Rome one does as the Romans do." Some problems will no longer exist if Rome has the proper economic, social, educational, and spiritual climate.
6. Most students benefit by good counsel. It is just as important to stimulate the intellectually gifted and well-adjusted students to perform at their optimum capacities as it is to help the less talented and poorly adjusted student.

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<sup>5</sup> Stanley C. Benz, *An Investigation of the Attributes and Techniques of High School Counselors*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Purdue University, February, 1948, pp. 28-29.



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

7. A counselor should himself be well-adjusted. One cannot share what he does not have.
8. A student should be considered as a whole person. A counselor must remember that the child brings to school with him all the experiences he had at home that morning and at play the day before. He brings with him all the fears, joys, anxieties, hopes, successes, and failures which have accumulated during his entire past. A particular behavior pattern may be only a symptom of the real problem.
9. A counselor should be straightforward and objective. He must be judicious in handling facts concerning the student, but the facts must be obtained and dealt with.
10. Counseling should be student-centered. If the student says he has a problem, then he has one. He should solve it. A counselor should talk the student's language. A counselor should believe that the student can solve his own problem. The counselor's job is to set up the proper environment and keep the conversation going along the line that will help the student bring his problem to the foreground and eventually discover the meaning of his own behavior.

### Evaluation by Observation and Demonstration

Another way to evaluate one's interviewing is by observing some skilled counselor in action. Although we cannot imitate others, we can learn a great deal from the work of those more skillful and more experienced than we.

The use of demonstration has also proved of considerable assistance. The setting for the interview can be shown. It is also possible to show selected parts of an interview: greeting the client, getting the conversation started, allowing tension releases, and exploring possible problem areas.

### A Final Audit

The counselor may find it helpful to check his interviewing activities against such criteria as the following:

## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

1. Does the counselor carefully prepare for each interview by studying the data pertinent to the case?
2. Does the counselor make it easy for the counselee to make full and wise use of the interview?
3. Does the counselor exert leadership, but maintain a flexible approach to each new development?
4. Is the counselee encouraged to free himself from tensions and fears?
5. Does the counselor accept the counselee as he is without expressing values regarding the counselee's statements?
6. Does the counselor make an effort to help the counselee grow in self-understanding?
7. Have both participants attempted to locate basic causes of the difficulty?
8. Does the counselor keep a written record of the interview?
9. Does the counselor maintain an objective attitude toward the counselee and his problems?
10. Is the counselor mindful at all times that a counselee's decisions must be emotionally as well as intellectually acceptable to the counselee?
11. Does the counselor aim at assisting counselee to become increasingly self-reliant?
12. Does the counselor make the counselee aware of their joint responsibilities in the counseling relationship?
13. Does the counselor recognize problems that may involve a series of interviews and plan accordingly?
14. Does the counselor recognize problems that are beyond his counseling skill or can most appropriately be handled by others and refer such problems to an appropriate resource?



## EVALUATING THE INTERVIEW

15. Does the counselor maintain high ethical standards regarding confidential information?
16. Does the counselor enlist the cooperation of parents, teachers, administrators, and community resources in assisting the counselee with his problems? Is he careful, however, to retain the confidence of the counselee in making such contacts.
17. Does the counselor make provision for follow-up of each counselee counseled?
18. Does the counselor review the entire interview to see how it might have been improved?

## SOME A B C's OF INTERVIEWING

**ARRANGE** the office so that there is an atmosphere of comfort, warmth, and informality. Flexibility and a choice of seating should be provided.

**BE FRIENDLY**, natural, personal, and relaxed.

**CAST ASIDE** unfinished business and concentrate on the job at hand. Few people can read their mail with one eye and carry on an interview with the other.

**DO** something to put the counselee at ease. If he finds it difficult during the beginning conversation, introduce a topic of mutual interest or discuss something of pride and accomplishment.

**EXHIBIT** a keen interest in the counselee and his statements. Provide for simple "acceptance." Let him tell his own story in his own way. This may be all he needs and as much as you can do.

**FIND OUT** what he considers to be important. Discuss his attitudes and why he takes the positions he has taken.

**GIVE** him ample opportunity to tell his own story. Let him talk freely without interruption if he seems so inclined.

**HELP** him to see his own problems. Try to help him focus these problems in proper perspective. Help him to become more objective about his own statements.

**INQUIRE** about the steps he has already taken in attempting to solve his difficulties. Determine, if possible, how much interest he has in wanting to find better solutions.



## SOME A B C'S OF INTERVIEWING

- JUDGE** his actions objectively, if they have to be judged at all. Relate these attitudes to the counselee's standards and welfare.
- KEEP** a friendly, sympathetic, and helpful relationship, but don't assume the responsibility for finding solutions to the counselee's problems.
- LEAD** the counselee to develop a definite plan of action for himself. When appropriate, suggest some possible next steps. Assist him to choose those plans which may prove most helpful, but leave the final decision to him. It is his life and he should have freedom to make his own choices.
- MENTION** by title and location books and other printed materials that might be helpful. Have available a library of such materials.
- NAME** people or community agencies interested in helping people with problems.
- OBSERVE** any signs of disappointment or discontent. These may be a clue to the real problems or may indicate that the interview is covering topics embarrassing to the counselee.
- PURSUE** the main problems until you are satisfied that the interview has been helpful. Don't extend the interview beyond the point of satisfaction.
- QUERY** the desire to preach, to moralize, to judge, or to make decisions.
- REVIEW** the steps that have been taken and encourage the counselee to summarize the interview.
- STIMULATE** the counselee to think for himself and to develop his own plans. A good counselor is always trying to work himself out of a job.
- TAKE TIME** to make notes of the interview. Postpone note-

## SOME A B C'S OF INTERVIEWING

taking until the conference is finished. Review these notes before the next interview.

**UTILIZE** all the resources available to you, confer with others, check the cumulative records, use test information, gather as much basic information as possible.

**VALUE** the counselee as a person. His welfare is of primary importance. Let him make decisions regarding future conferences or interviews.

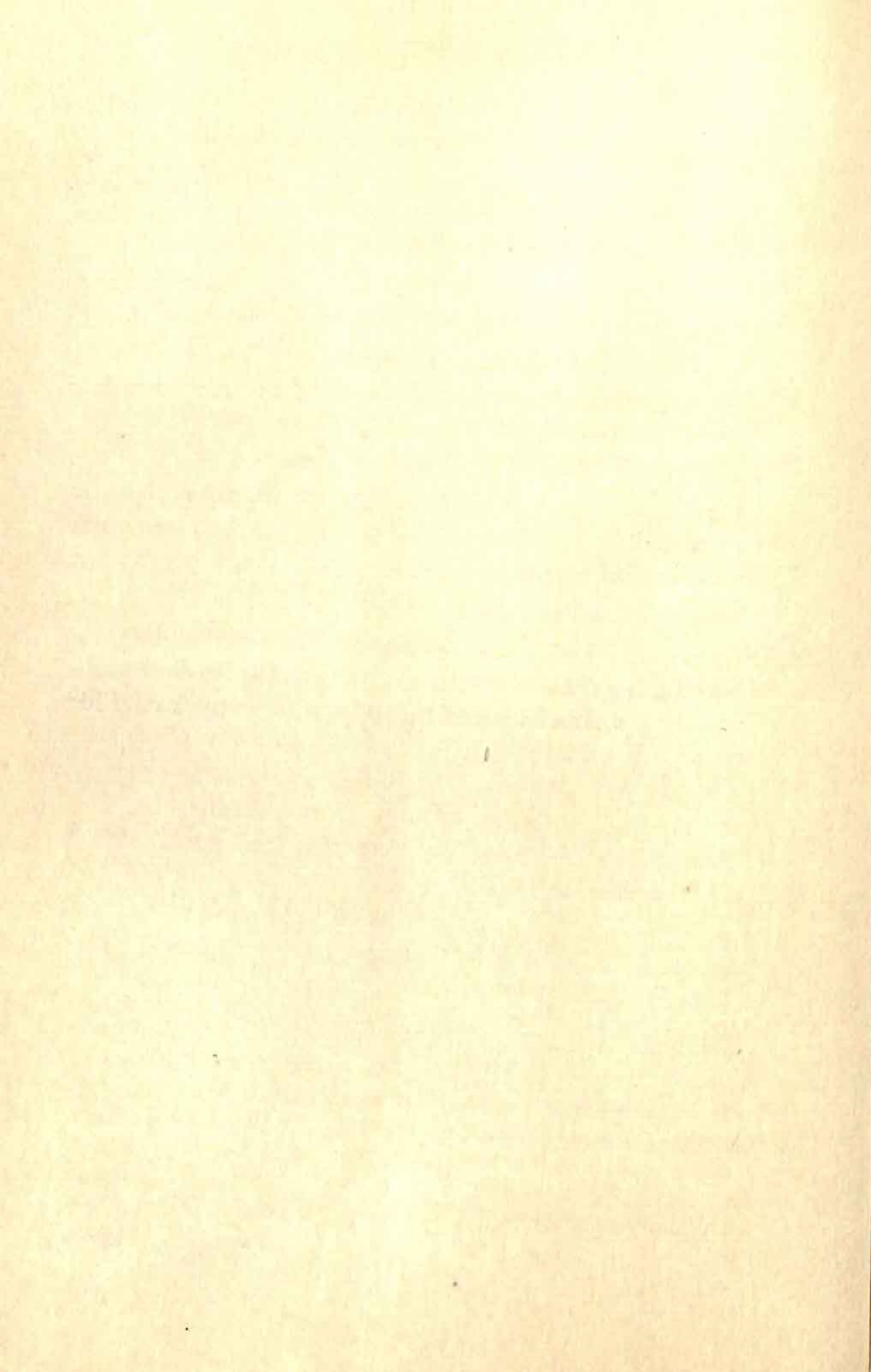
**WITHHOLD** information about the counselee. Never violate a confidence.

**XPECT** to meet many problems you cannot solve alone. Share these situations with other persons who might be helpful.

**YIELD** to the specialist in areas outside your own field, but follow-up and cooperate with others.

**ZEALOUSLY PROTECT** the counselee in his responsibility for making his own decisions and for solving his own problems. He should have the opportunity to "make his own bed and lie in it."





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A short concise statement of many factors in interviewing. Section III is devoted to interviewing problems and practices.

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